Chapter 1

INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND

1.0 Introduction

This chapter begins by outlining the background of the study and presenting the statement of the problem. It is then followed by a listing of the objectives of the study and it ends with the significance and the limitation of the study.

1.1 Background of the Study

Research on sports and the representation of the athletes, which focuses on dynamic sportswomen is rather rare as much is carried out on sports and masculinity. However, the focus of the few studies on sportswomen is usually on their sexuality, emotional visibility and personal lives (McKay & Schell, 2010; Hargreaves & Hardin, 2009; Kian, 2009; Galily & Berstein, 2008; Thorpe, 2008; Wade, 2008; Nicely, 2007; Adam & Tuggle, 2004; Stevenson, 2002). In addition, the studies conducted analysed the linguistic and stylistic elements of texts. This study, however, undertakes a multimodal analysis where both language and visuals present in the data will be analysed.

1.1.1   Sports and Gender

Messner (1992b) as quoted by Drowkin & Wachs (2000) claimed that sports is one of the most powerful socializing institutions for masculinity. There are two fundamental dimensions that support the idea that sports represents masculine hegemony. Firstly, it links maleness with highly valued and visible skills. Secondly, it links maleness with the positively sanctioned use of aggression/force/violence (Bryson, 1987).

In general, Kane (1988) quoted by Drowkin and Wachs (2003) stated that team sports which are considered male-appropriate, often involve overcoming opponents' defences and asserting mastery and control of field of play, whereas sports that emphasize grace, such as gymnastics and figure skating, are associated with feminism. These sports only involve one receiving an individual score, theoretically, that is in no way dependent on the other participants' actions.

It is for the above reasons that society believes that sports crucially privileges males and inferiorises females; as Bryson (1987) puts, sports activities such as gymnastics, ice-skating and figure-skating are not treated as 'real' sports as they are more of the art form of gracefulness rather than strength, skills and endurance.

A core value in sports is the construction of masculinity, which elevates male experience over female. Birch and Theburge (1994a, 1994b), Bryson (1987, 1990), Connel (1987), Hall (1993), Hargreaves (1994), Messner and Sabo (1990) and Willis (1982) were among famous scholars who have depicted sports as a particularly powerful setting for masculine construction. Whitson (1990) claimed sports as one of the central sites for the emergence of social production of masculinity and Connel (1987) added that sports is the most systematic institution '*promoting the image of ideal masculine*'.

A sports activity requires skills, strategy and commitment. Governed by a set of rules and customs, it is usually competitive, requiring mental skills and physical involvement. It is defined as an activity in which men and children participate; where the phrase *children* refers to male children rather than females. To accentuate male dominance and masculinity in sports, females who still wish to enjoy sports, have to enjoy it according to men's rule, where Darlison (1983) quoted by Bryson (1983) emphasized that "*If women want to play the game, they are going to have to play it by the male rules*". Due to this, women were not encouraged and credited when they were

involved in sports historically. The exclusion of women in the sports arena was also reinforced by the medical professionals. They claimed that women's physique is frail and that continuous strenuous activities may compromise their reproductive system. This belief was held over centuries despite having more women involvement in sports. It is thus, inferred that, the medical professional plays a dominant role in deciding which sports activities are safe for women.

Owing to this, female athletes had never been given the privilege of being highlighted in sports as their presence in the sports arena is focused on *"presence or absence of femininity among female athletes, and the comparative capabilities of men and women in sports."* (Orlansky, 2007).

Therefore, studies have proven that, non-masculine groups i.e. females are often marginalized and trivialised in sports thus undermining their position in a society that highly value sports.

1.1.2   Sports and Media

The media has a preference for male athletes as compared to female. Only the unusually talented manage to get media attention. A plethora of authors claimed that the media is the primary force that helps to preserve and maintain masculine dominance in sports (Kian, 2009). This is proven by Daddario (1997) and Vincent (2004) works that the media only channelled their focus on male sporting activities. Women on the other hand, often received less coverage unless they offered sex appeal. Eastman & Billings (2000) claimed that the media portrays women more as sex objects, minimizing their accomplishments and skills by comparing them to men's abilities. Sports is the men's world, therefore, men are the yardsticks.

Klien (1988) claimed that for women to be covered in the media, they have to be *unusually talented.* She also quoted from an article in a West Germany daily newspaper,

Westdeutsche Allgemeine Zeitung (WAZ), dated 14 Feb 79, that sportswomen, too, must be *extremely self-disciplined, develop ambition, be confident and, for example, should not lose "the desire to achieve, despite setbacks"*. Nonetheless, in her findings she stated that over time, women representation in sports reporting has gradually changed. Women now share the same discursive mechanism and stylistic features of sports reporting as men.2

Despite that many scholars still firmly believe that media acts as the primary force in helping to preserve and maintain male dominance in sports (Hargreaves, 1994; Galily & Berstein, 2008; Orlansky 2004). As a result, of the many studies we have today, almost none have focused on female athletes without involving a gender-bias issue.

1.2 Statement of the Problem

Talking about sports elicits many pictures of masculinity. Any kind of sports has been closely related to male dominance. Sports events, which emphasize physical size and strengths accompanied by aggression, competitiveness, invisible emotion and power desire for success and excellence, have turned into a nurtured belief that it is the epitome for masculinity. Since the commencement of the Olympiad era, sports has been constructed as a patented base where men erect the barrier of physical superiority over women. Regardless of this ancient establishment, these days, the sports arena may have gone through some gender changes with the participation of female athletes. This heightens the competition in the arena but provides a better reason for sports fans to follow the arena.

Though changes have taken place, to date, men's relation to sports is still seen as the *norm* but women's relation to sports has become a *gender issue* (Drummond, 1994). Since the 70s, researches on sports and women athletes have extensively been conducted. Among the latest are Mckay & Schell (2010), Hargreaves (2009), Kian

(2009), Thorpe (2008), Wade (2008), Galily & Berstein (2008), Kian (2008), Nicely (2007), Adam & Tuggle (2004) and Stevenson (2002). Each scholar asserts that, women athletes are almost constantly, marginalized, trivialized or sexualized in media sports reporting of various media resources; the radio, the television, the newspapers and the internet. Women sports coverage is argued to *remain inferior to of men* (Adam & Tuggle, 2004). Should they receive any coverage, it frequently *covers their personal lives issues minimizing their accomplishments and achievements* (Kian, 2006, 2008, 2009), and this happen more to female athletes as compared to male athletes. Additionally, in media reports, they are *unfairly framed and under-represented* (Nicely, 2007). Whilst Hargreaves & Hardin (2009) presumed that *just as media tends to see people with disabilities as not having the ideal body, it also tends to frame female athletes as "sexually different"*. Klien (1988) added that for women athletes to be included and accepted in the sports reporting just as the male athletes, they have to be *unusually talented.* To be assimilated to the *world elite*, they have to achieve an *absolute triumph*, an immortal state with extreme self-discipline, ambition and confidence.

It is for this particular claim and the claim that sports reporting has frequently focused on male athletes that this multimodal research is being carried out. It sets out to further enrich the field of sports news reporting by focusing on reports of a female athlete in the Malaysian context. This paper, hence, will analyse how *Nicol Ann David*, a Malaysian-born female world class squash player, who has been ranked the World No. 1 player since 2006, is being framed in the most-circulated English-language Malaysian daily *The Star* in 2010. The research also aims at analysing the non-linguistic feature, i.e. the visuals used by the journalists, in order to find out if they have assisted them in maintaining Nicol's frames. This focus is deemed imperative as previous studies on sports news reporting are basically based on linguistic evidence.

1.3   Objectives of the Study

This research is conducted to examine how Nicol Ann David, the Malaysian World No. 1 Squash Queen is being framed in the verbal texts of the most-circulated English-language newspaper in Malaysia, *The Star,* in 2010.

The research also aims at investigating whether the non-linguistic features i.e.; the visuals that accompany the reports support the linguistic frames used to depict her representation in the society as the World No. 1 Squash Queen (http://www.wispa.net). This would be an important contribution to the field as the previous studies on sports news are mostly linguistically based.

1.4   Research Questions

The research questions are:

1. What are the frames used to depict Nicol Ann David, in the sports reports of the *The Star*?

2. How are the frames used to depict Nicol Ann David linguistically realized?

3. Do the visuals in the reports support the linguistic frames established by the verbal texts?

1.5   Significance of the Study

Studies on stylistic features of sports news reporting have frequently focused on male athletes (Klien, 1988). Studies conducted on female athletes, on the contrary, have never been beyond a gender-bias issue. This is because studies on female athletes usually highlighted issues of female athletes being trivialized, marginalized and sexualized. This study, therefore, sets out to examine how, *Nicol Ann David*, *the Malaysian World No. 1 ranked woman squash player* is being framed in the most circulated and most widely-read English-language Malaysian daily. Is she also

marginalized, trivialized and sexualised in the reports of the daily? By undertaking this research, this study could be the first analysis of an athlete in Malaysia.

In addition, this study will also reveal whether marginalization, trivialization and sexualisation of female athletes in media sports reporting is a global ideology. Thus, the findings of the study could prove whether that the contested gender divide between masculinity and femininity in the sports arena has been bridged.

The data of the study is analysed using *Framing Theory* of Goffman (1974) and the *Visual Analysis* of Kress and Van Leeuwen (1999). Framing allows people to locate, perceive, identify, organise issues around them. It is a critical activity in the construction of social reality because it helps shape the perspective through which people see the world (Hallahan, 1999). Framing is also argued to be an unobtrusive or non-reactive method (Krippendorf, 2004) thus it has no consequence on the subject studied for the content has already been written (Babbie, 1995). The visual analysis of the visual elements in the data allows the researcher to examine the representation and interaction aspects of visuals. Not many studies have included visual analysis in studies on sports and athletes. Thus, this study is significant for being a multimodal analysis of framing of a Malaysian athlete.

Lastly, not many studies on sports have focused on examining female athletes. Therefore, this study also presents a rare insight on how a female athlete is being represented in the printed sports news reports especially in Malaysia.

1.6 Limitations of the Study

The data of this study is limited to 45 news reports on the World No. 1, Women Squash player, Nicol Ann David. These reports were taken from the sports Section of an English-language daily in Malaysia, *The Star* from March 2010 to November 2010. Hence, the number of the reports collected for the study was relatively small. With only

45 sports reports covering one female athlete in a season of all nine winning streak, the interpretation of the study may be restricted and limited. Therefore, it would not possibly be appropriate to formulate general assumption on how female athletes are being framed by the printed media. Moreover, the time frame of a season which happens to be a complete winning streak may be slightly biased as no news published would have any reports on her failure.

Furthermore, this study only covers one English-language daily, *The Star*. Despite being the most circulated and the most widely read English-language daily, the influence of this daily is still dominated by the national language newspapers, the Malay-language ones. In addition, there were also no international newspapers selected as data. As such, only the local, English reports were used as data.

Finally, the data collected was only limited to a particular year, the year 2010. Nonetheless, this year was chosen as it was the year when Nicol Ann David retained her World No. 1 title for five years in women single squash tournament. This record is unmatched even by the famous tennis duo Serena and Venus Williams. The year also marked her third consecutive year of retaining her World Open title.

1.7 Conclusion

This chapter has clearly outlined the principal sections of this study which covers the background of the study, the statement of problem, the objectives, the significance and the limitation of the study.

Chapter 2

LITERATURE REVIEW

2.0 Introduction

This chapter reviews the literature pertaining to the issues of the study. There are three sub-sections in this chapter. The first sub-section reviews articles, previous studies and readings on female athletes and their relationship with sports and the media. This is followed by the second sub-section that reviews *Goffman's Framing Theory* (1974) and studies conducted by Kian (2006, 2008, 2009). *Goffman's Framing Theory* is the underlying theory for the study while Kian's studies (2006, 2008, 2009) which proposed the *framework of descriptive categories of framing athletes* is used as the analytical framework for the study. Finally, the third sub-section details out the review on visual analysis and *Interaction Analysis* of Kress and Van Leeuwen (1999), the framework used to conduct the visual analysis.

2.1 Female Athletes, sports and the Media

Shahid (2006) argued that the study of sports has been stagnant. He claimed that it has always focused on the issue of sports and gender as compared to other perspectives. Drummond (1994) claimed that this happens because studies on female and sports will become a *gender issue* while studies on men and sports will become *the norm*.

Theberg (1981) argued that the initial feminist critique of sports was *sports being a fundamentally sexist institution that is male dominated and masculine in orientation*. This is supported by Connellan (2001) who asserted that in order to retain male hegemony in sports, male are always associated with power and privilege over female. In order to retain this power and privilege over female in sports, female athletes suffer discrimination in their reporting. In news reports, they are usually camouflaged with issues on marginalization, trivialization and sexualisation (Mckay & Schell, 2010;

Hargreaves & Hardin, 2009; Kian, 2009, 2008, 2006 ; Thorpe, 2008; Wade, 2008; Galily & Berstein 2008; Nicely, 2007; Adam & Tuggle, 2004; Stevenson, 2002; Whannel, 2000 and Messner & Sabo, 1990).

Not only do they face discrimination on the field or on the track, female athletes also suffer discrimination in the media. Studies conducted by Kian (2006, 2008, 2009), Berstein & Galily (2008), Alexander (1994), Crossman, Hyslop & Guthrie (1994), Klien, 1988), reveal that in Israeli, United States, Canadian, West German and Norwegian print media, female athletes suffer invisibility with fewer, shorter articles, fewer photographs and are described stereotypically in a feminine way. The studies found that the media could partially be blamed for the constant negative representation of female athletes. Besides, there are only a small number of commentators and sports writers who place their attention to female athletes. Furthermore, live coverage would compare male and female physical built and achievement (Dufur, 2006 & Galily & Berstein 2008). As such, Shahid (2006) suggested that studies on sports should explore new directions and adopt new types of analysis and that more attention should be given to tying findings about sports to broader social trends (Dufur,2006). Nevertheless, it still seems difficult to have this realized.

Nicely (2007) carried out a study on media framing of female athletes and women's sports in the selected 3 sports magazines in the U.S.; ESPN Magazine, Sporting News, and Sports Illustrated. The study found that there are 4 major common themes that emerged in women's sports reporting from previous research namely; 1) mental weakness, 2) male reference (reference to husband/boyfriend/coach), 3) motherhood and sisterhood and 4) celebrity with mental weakness. The utilization of the frames, however, was very much controlled by the magazines.

Moreover, Hargreaves & Hardin (2009) conducted a research on women wheelchair athletes and found that disability sports media is not as accessible as the main stream

media in America. This is because, in America, the athletes with disabilities are equally treated with the female athletes as historically marginalized or ignored groups of athletes. The findings also show that these athletes blame the media for the lack of coverage of female & individuals with disability in sports media where they usually suffer lack of images or portrayed as passive participants. For this, female and disabled athletes find it tiring and frustrating to be stereotyped by the media as sex symbols or tomboys.

Apart from that, Kian (2006) further analysed the data collected from the print media by comparing it with the electronic media, the television. One of his aims was to see the presence of gender-specific stereotypes and descriptors, found in studies of television commentary of women's and men's National Collegiate Athletic Association (NCAA) Division 1 basketball tournaments (March Madness) which analysed the print media coverage. In this study, Kian coded 9 descriptive categories which are *(1) physical appearance, sexuality, attire; (2) athletic prowess, strength; (3) athletic weaknesses, limitations; (4) positive skill level, accomplishments; (5) negative skill level, failures; (6) family role, personal relationships; (7) psychological strengths, emotional strengths; (8) psychological weaknesses, emotional weakness;* and *(9) humour*. Previous studies conducted by Billings & Eastman (2002), Messner et. al (1996) and Kane & Parks (1992) proved that female athletes were mostly described in terms of their appearance, heterosexuality, failures and emotional weaknesses more compared to male athletes. Kian's findings, however, disproved these findings, as female athletes in the March Madness were coded more in the strengths and accomplishment categories. On the contrary, male athletes were coded in more negative categories such as *physical appearance, sexuality, athletic weaknesses, limitations¸ family role, personal relationships,psychological weaknesses and emotional weakness.* Nevertheless in total, the male coverage percentage still surpassed female coverage in

the strengths and accomplishments categories. This study was replicated by Kian in 2008 and 2009. In 2008, Kian set out the same research on the two national newspapers in America, the New York Times and the US Today on similar subject, March Madness. The findings were found similar to the earlier research where men were coded in more negative categories. The study was again replicated in 2009 and this time the data selection was from internet sites and newspapers where the subject was the 2007 U.S. Open, men's and women's tennis tournaments. The study revealed that the newspaper articles are more likely to marginalize, trivialize and sexualise the female athletes when more coverage was given on their personal life and relationships as compared to strengths and accomplishment. The internet sites on the other hand, proved a more inconsistent result when descriptors such as female athletic strengths and accomplishments are present yet the content is still less compared to male athletic strengths and accomplishments.

With regards to the visual analysis of representation of female athletes in the media, not many studies have been conducted. Fink and Kensicki (2002) conducted a study on visual and textual construction of femininity in two magazines, *Sports Illustrated* and *Sports Illustrated for Women*. The primary aim of the study was to analyse both visual and literal texts on female athletes' coverage and to determine whether the coverage on female athletes has changed. The findings were as hypothesized where female athletes are still under-presented (Fink & Kensicki, 2002). They are still portrayed as 'feminine role models' and 'trivialized sex symbols' (Fink & Kensicki, 2002). Female athletes are photographed clad in feminine sexy dresses/sports attire such as sports bra, skirts and bikini with make-up and hairdo. They are also photographed with sexy, feminine poses.

Moreover, Thorpe (2008) who conducted a study to examine female snow boarders found that female snowboarders suffer marginalization, trivialization and sexualisation (Thorpe, 2008) through verbal reporting and visual representation. Reports in television

and newspapers cover more on male snowboarders. The advertisement would portray male snow boarders as young, white, hedonistic and rebellious while female snowboarders are wild and tomboys (Thorpe, 2008). This is because in advertisement**s**, female snowboarders are sexily dressed. Besides that, female snowboarders are also excluded in snowboarding films (Thorpe, 2008).

In addition, Wade (2008) extended her study on the representation of female athletes of different races; the Whites and the Blacks. Findings revealed that White female athletes have greater representation and portrayal with feminine images. Black female athletes are portrayed with more athletic poses. These are proven with the images revealed in the magazine articles. Black female athletes are usually photographed on tracks. On the other hand, White female athletes are usually photographed in a feminine way, out of sports-setting and also sexually suggestive (Wade, 2008).

Another study, with a similar objective to analyse female athlete in the media was set by McKay & Schell (2010) to study how female rock climbers are depicted in the photograph and the text of feature articles. Analysis on 114 issues of *Climbing* magazine published between 1994 and 2004 proved that female climbers are photographed in a very feminine way; young, white, able-bodied and shoulder-length hair (McKay & Schell, 2010). While in the feature articles, female climbers are also portrayed in a feminine way despite the participation in the masculine sports. The findings show that there were 3 major themes representing female climbers; a) emphasizing female's heterosexuality as wife, mother or girlfriend, b) highlighting physical appearance and c) infantilizing the female climbers. Thus, this study concluded that, the findings were similar to those in prior researches which proved that female athletes are trivialized and devalued of their accomplishments.

These studies proved that despite the diversity of media selections in carrying out the various research, their outcome always comes back to the only conclusion that, female athletes, even among different races and in different sports, are commonly marginalized, trivialized and sexualised as evidenced in the reports, feature articles and the photographs they are in. These studies also prove that, not so much focus is given on studying female athletes without the issue of marginalization, trivialization and sexualisation and also, visual analysis per say, is not being adopted in many research studying female athletes in the media.

With marginalization, trivialization and sexualisation of female athletes becoming the widely claimed feminist critique, Messner (1992) believed that most studies tended to leave men's relationship with sports *unexamined* and *an unquestioned norm* while with female's, it is always gender biased. Dufur (2006) agreed stating that to further restrict female from participating in sports, physical size and strength become the contested issues. Despite that, Dufur (2006) further argued that female still play sports for centuries, from throwing javelin in ancient Greece to wrestling in Gambia, Nigeria and Congo, in which were done under great constraint of gendered domestic roles, ideas of femininity and the primacy of men in sports. This shows that, some female athletes have proven that they are, in their own ways, could survive and triumph in the men's dominated world of sports.

Beginning from the 70s, it is found that the issue of female athletes is also about being more androgyny than other female (Dufur, 2006). Numerous studies have disclosed various different findings where some seem to be debatable. All in all these studies (Halbert, 1997; Blinde & Taub 1992 & Felshin, 1974) summarized that female athletes have to persist in their feminist appearance and status as female (Dufur, 2006). Dufur, therefore, suggested that scholars should generate new studies examining old questions with new ideas such as exploring how female athletes create alternative forms

of femininity through sports participation instead of the stagnant issue of marginalization, trivialisation and sexualisation of female athletes.

As a conclusion, it could be summarized that what the studies of sports, gender and the media is missing are studies that do not focus on marginalization and trivialization of female athletes. This new direction of studies would therefore abridge the stagnation of vast opportunities in studying sports, athletes and the media.

2.2 Framing

Frame Analysis was the brain child of Erving Goffman (1974). It was first introduced in his book, *Frame Analysis: An Essay of Organization of Experience*. The concept of *frames* is used to label *schemata of interpretation*. *Frames* allow people to locate, perceive, identify, organise experience and guide actions. Being a broad theoretical approach, Gamson (1975) wondered whether there is a need for adequate systematization for this theory while Konig (2005) claimed that *Framing* is *neither a full-pledged theoretical paradigm nor coherent methodological approach*. Nonetheless, *its unorthodox appropriation by scholars of different tradition* is the only most important factor for its success. Media study is one of the three subject areas that employs Goffman's Framing Theory rather extensively. To date, Entman's study (1993) seems to be the starting point for media frame analysis.

The concepts of *Framing* and *Frame* carry vast definition where framing literature is concerned. Entman et. al. (1993) highlight that the most general definition of *Framing* follows Gamson and Modigliani (1987) who defined *Framing* as *central organizing idea or story line that provide meanings to an unfolding strips of events*. Entman (1993) in his article *Framing: Towards Clarifications of Fractured Paradigm* further defined *Framing* as *the process of selecting some aspects of a perceived reality and constructing messages that highlight connections among them in ways that promote a particular interpretation*. When *framing*, *communicators* (Entman, 1993) who are the

news journalists, are believed to wield the powers on the outcomes of the communication. This means that the news journalists induce the target audience in this study, the readers of the sports section of *The Star,* to accept their representation or perceived image of *Nicol Ann David* as *the Malaysian World No. 1 squash player.*

On the other hand, Chong & Druckman (2007) defines *Framing* as the process by which people develop a particular conceptualization of an issue of a figure. *Frames,* therefore, are present to endorse and advocate the conceptualization of an issue as determined by the communicators. Media study is one of the three disciplines that has become prominent in the development of frame analyses.

All in all, *Framing* can be concluded as a process whereby the journalists select the perceived reality of the real world to be presented to the media audience and how the selected perceived reality is preserved in their reports in order to ensure readers receive the messages conveyed in each inter-related text.

Framing is a critical activity in the construction of social reality because it helps shape the perspective through which people see the world (Hallahan, 1999). Framing allows communicators to systematically put vast information into a well-defined context by constructing frames or reference of some issues, people or objects. These frames or references let people assess information, grasp the meanings and take actions whenever possible. A frame limits the message's meaning by shaping the inferences that individuals make about the message. They reflect judgements made by message communicators.

Beyond this well explained conceptualization of framing, it was adversely affected by the lack of coherent definitions. What scholars have to adopt *Framing* as in terms of their central framework is only a simple guideline on finding frames. In the media, frames appear in the following four ways; i) metaphors, ii) word choices, iii) descriptions and iv) arguments.

Gamson and Modigliani (1982) in a more refined way outlined five framing devices;

i) *Metaphor* (comparisons)

ii) *Exemplars* (historical examples from which lessons are drawn)

iii) *Catchphrases* (buzzwords or words or phrases commonly used to describe a quality or phenomenon

iv) Depictions (characterizations of people or events) *and*

v) *Icons* (visual images)

Krippendorff (2004) argued that framing analysis is an unobtrusive or non-reactive method by social scientists that has been applied to nearly every form of communication such as newspapers, televisions and radio broadcasts, speeches, literature and etc for the reason that they have no effect on the subjects studied and the content has already been written or spoken (Babbie, 1995).

As a result, most framing studies are conducted on political figures and controversial issues (Shakila, 2001, Stromback et.al, 2008, Moore, 2009, Lee & Mohd, 2009, and Coghlan, 2010). Shakila (2001) attempted to study how language used by the National English-language newspaper, the New Straits Times, frames Anwar Ibrahim, the former deputy prime minister of Malaysia who initiated a Reformasi movement after being sacked from the government. Findings reveal that Anwar was cast as powerful to be able to initiate reformation yet his Reformasi movement is often portrayed as violent and destructive added with visuals as the support to the claim.

Another controversial study on a political figure was conducted by Lee & Mohd (2009) on Datuk Yong Teck Lee, a Sabahan Member of Parliament of Malaysia who was involved in bribery. The study aimed at showing how different newspapers projected the image and the personality of a figure by means of their texts and visuals. The results show that in newspapers with diverse language such as Mandarin and

Bahasa, Datuk Yong Teck Lee was both portrayed as a hero and a villain. The results also show that, the base of the newspaper productions for example, in Kuala Lumpur and in Sabah, played a role on how Yong Teck Lee is framed in the reports and visuals.

Apart from studies on the framing of male political figure, there is also on female political figures. Coghlan (2010) set out to research how the Western media frame Megawati Sukarnoputri between 1998-1999, the years when Indonesia was in a crisis. The study aimed at examining the structural links between how this figure is framed in the reports and how the frames are maintained to shape the view of the public. The findings reveal that, Megawati, being female, is framed as a weak leader with reference to her motherhood. The frames established were maintained throughout the reports within the data collection time with the help of the lexical items used to describe Megawati being the female political figure combating crisis in Indonesia between 1998-1999.

Besides studying political figures and their controversial issues, there are also studies conducted to analyze framing with regard to other types of data. Strombock et.al. (2008) set out to study how Michael Vick, a professional quarterback for the National Football League (NFL) in America, was framed after his controversy of dogfighting while Moore (2009) conducted a study to examine the comparison of Swedish and US Press on framing the Muhammad cartoon issue.

In short, the literature has enlightened that most studies conducted on framing seem to have more focus on political or controversial issues and figures. Studies on framing the female athletes textually and visually seem to be difficult to find.

2.2.1 Kian's Framework of Descriptive Categories of Framing Athletes (2006)

Kian in his PhD thesis, *Masculine Hegemony in March Madness: A Textual Analysis of Gendered-language used by Newspaper and Online sports writers covering NCAA Women's and Men's Basketball Tournaments* developed nine descriptors; *(1) physical appearance, sexuality, attire; (2) athletic prowess, strength; (3) athletic weaknesses, limitations; (4) positive skill level, accomplishments; (5) negative skill level, failures; (6) family role, personal relationships; (7) psychological strengths, emotional strengths; (8) psychological weaknesses, emotional weakness;* and *(9) humour*. These findings of the descriptors were based on the extensive literature on sports as men hegemonic institution, preserving men power over women. Nonetheless, these studies which include among others, Daddario (1997), Eastman & Billing (2000) and Vincent (2004), were studies on commentaries on men's power in sports that did not clearly outlined specific descriptors. These studies only provided vast interpretative themes such as i) *she must have been a tomboy,* ii) *women still don't have 'next'* and iii) *parents are newsworthy, especially athletic father*, Kian (2006). With these vast themes, Kian (2006) affirmed that the interpretation of findings would be more subjective.

Thus, the underlying factor put forth by Kian (2006) for the need of a clear framework on analysing how male and female athletes being narrated in the written reports is that the previous studies focused only on themes rather than specific descriptors. These themes, according to Kian (2006), may cause disagreements as the themes are vast and are open to interpretations by different researchers. Furthermore, in his thesis also, Kian (2006) suggested the importance of having quantitative analyses as the disadvantage of qualitative analysis alone is polysemic, which means that the analysis is open to different interpretations by different readers. In quantitative analysis, a few coders with common background on the issue will help in the coding process. He

believes that quantitative approach together with qualitative approach in this type of studies would help to validate that the findings are not the subjective interpretation of one researcher.

2.3 Visual Analysis

Fred S. Parrish (2002) claimed that photography is a *representation of reality* that is able to enliven the past by allowing us to remember our personal experiences in which it will also let people to understand themselves or the people around them better. Badrul (2006) agreed that photographs stop and capture the moment of human experience which enables them to witness the moments later.

However, Badrul (2006) argued that Parrish's term of photography as *representation of reality* should not be overused as he claimed that the phrase was made of *critical oxymoronic properties – representation and reality.* Kress and Van Leeuwen (1999) also argued that this type of visual does not necessarily reproduce the structure of reality. They emphasized that visuals are controlled by the interest of the social institution or the cultural background where it is being reproduced. In other words, visuals are ideological as they have profoundly critical semantic dimension. In the case of images/photographs that appear in the newspaper, Badrul (2006) and Kress and Van Leeuwen (1999) seem to stand on the same ground as Schirato and Yell (2000:118) who defined that;

> *Every photograph functions as little more than adjunct to an article. All of the pertinent details are in the written text, which means that these photographs are deployed primarily as evidence or support for (yes, it did happen, here is a picture to prove it) and as a means of personalizing (here are some smiling faces) the articles.*

For this reason, more studies were set out to examine how photographs/visuals in texts support the messages intended for the audience. Lundgaard's (2010) seems to

be among the most interesting to conduct a multimodal analysis on sports. The study was set out to analyse a poster and a 4.06 minute length video retrieved from www.copenhagen2009.org to examine how lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender (LGBT) are portrayed in the world outgames. Findings reveal that LGBTs are also marginalized in both media and the visuals attached, which complemented the texts structured in the poster and the video.

In the business and corporate world, Bell (2001), Manchin (2004), Schroeder & Zwick (2004) and Samani, (2006) carried out studies to analyse visual in advertisements and magazines and examine how this visual complement the texts featured. Bell (2001) set out a visual content analysis of *Cleo* magazine covers since it was first published in 1972, using Kress & Van Leeuwen's social distance analysis and visual modality and behaviour (contact). The findings concluded that the visual of *Cleo* covers has changed since it was published in 1972. Images of the 90s are more distant, less close up than in the 70s. The models of the 90s also were portrayed in less powerful poses despite having frequent gaze with the viewers. Therefore, Bell (2001) concluded that the implications of the study could be discussed in terms of the changing role of women, the comparative youth of famous fashion models, the changing demography to younger target audience and the increase of 'sexualisation' of youth culture .

In addition, Manchin (2004) carried out a study to describe the visual language of Getty image bank as a symbolic system of business. The aim of the study is to investigate the representation of women in the image bank where it provides insights of the kinds of actors, actions, settings and mood to be seen around the world because of the image bank (Manchin, 2004). The findings reveal that the image bank has successfully *transform the visual language along the logic of economies of scale and how the images that sell best accord with existing consumer categories,* for example an image of businesswoman using laptop with her colleague on a mobile phone represents

office space, an image woman architect with hard hat and blue prints in hand represents *construction* and an image of jumping woman represents *freedom* (Manchin, 2004).

Schroeder & Zwick (2004) investigated how male representation gives impact on the production and consumption of advertising images. Findings, like most studies reveal that, the visuals that accompany the texts of the advertisements influence the audience deeper, for example in the Lexus LS400 which quoted "Introducing a Lexus for Those Who've Never Seen Themselves in a Lexus", a man was portrayed fading into the billboard featuring the car, Lexus LS400 in which Schroeder & Zwick (2004) summarized as the man now sees himself in a Lexus.

Besides that, Mus Chairil (2006) carried out a study investigating how visual images in the advertisement in print media can be an alternative language where the elements in the visuals send messages of different meanings. The media selection was 2 local Malaysian magazines on information technology. From the findings, it can be concluded that a striking feature of the visual images used is that it is highly gender bias. Some of the examples are the portrayal of women, children and men. In images with women, they signify the ease of use for the information technology equipment (Mus Chairil, 2006). Images of children also signify the same idea. Men, however, when they are portrayed in the advertisements, they signify authority while young figures are usually associated with enjoyment and carefree attitude towards life.

The powerful language of an image does not only play major role in advertisements but also in the portrayal of images online on websites (Royal 2006). Nevertheless, the portrayal of images of political scandals (Kroon & Ekstrom, 2006), terrorism (Wang, 2007) and violence (Scheerlinck, 2008) seem to be a more focused studies on visual analysis.

Royal (2006) set out to analyse images on the technology section on Google News and Yahoo News. The findings reveal that women also suffer trivialization

online. This claim was made because the general emphasis of the images is largely white and male.

However, studies on visual analysis found in the past few years, focus more on serious issues such as terrorism, violence and political scandals. Kroon & Ekstrom (2006) studied the connection between media construction of scandal and how this has influence a public figure. The study shows that the visuals played the conventional role of portraying masculinity and femininity. The photograph of a female political figure, who was involved in a scandal, shows that she was cornered and portrayed as lonesome and vulnerable. However, the photograph of a male political figure who was also involved in a scandal was portrayed as more confidence, fighting for his right, apologising to the media and was accepted (Kroon & Ekstrom, 2006).

Apart from that, Wang (2007) conducted a study to examine the role the visuals in a text play in its relation to the verbal metaphor of *terrorist threat*, in the *Sydney Morning Herald*, 2003, using Kress and van Leeuwen's Visual Semiotic Framework (1996). Findings reveal that the visual images used in the text could either be interacting equally with the texts or complementing them. This, Wang (2007) emphasized, depends on the exploitation done by the writers, for example, a Black terrorist is visualized by a photo of a Black man with a gun slung to his shoulder.

Besides that, Scheerlinck (2008) carried out a study to examine how the Western visuals frame violence against the Arabs and the Muslims. The study used Critical Visual Analysis as the framework. The study found that there is bias where Western soldiers are portrayed as more superior compared to the Arabs and the Muslims. This is due to the Western background of the photojournalists. This is proven by the dominant number of violent photographs depicting the Arabs and the Muslims as violent that have won awards. Some photographs that have won Pulitzer Prize 2005 were a series of photographs of bloody yearlong combat inside Iraqi cities. The photographs feature

Iraqi insurgents combating the US troops in Fallujah, the celebration of the insurgent success of killing the US contractors and the celebration of an Iraqi man over an explosion that set fire on four US humvees. This finding proves that the visuals sometimes have more impact than any texts can verbalised.

Despite having numbers of studies analysing visuals, not many have used the visual analysis frameworks developed by the semioticians. Not many also have aimed at analysing the connections of visuals and texts using these frameworks. One of the best to adopt for studying the correlation of visuals and texts is Kress and Van Leeuwen's *Interaction Analysis* (1999). The *Interaction Analysis* is an analysis that enables researchers to study the interaction between participant of the image and the viewers of the image. Kress and Van Leeuwen (1999) proposed three elements of *interaction analysis* which are *contact, distance* and *power*, with *contact* referring to the eye contact established between participants and readers while *distance* refer to the social distance between the participants and the readers which is realize through the different shots taken of the visuals. Kress and Van Leeuwen (1999) outlined five types of shots which signified different meanings and they are; *close shot/close-up* (*head to shoulder*), *medium close shot* (*waist and above*), *medium shot* (*knees and above*), *medium long shot* (*full figure*) and *long shot* (*full figure is half of the height of whole frame*). According to Kress and Van Leeuwen (1999) these shots represents different social distance between the participants and readers. *Power,* on the other hand, is determined by the high or low angle shot. Thus, this study will analyse the visuals in the reports in terms of interaction with the readers of the report, focusing on the *contact* and *distance*, to determine whether they complement the frames that will be established.

2.4 Conclusion

The above sections have clearly summarised literature that serve as the foundation for the study. The chapter covers the main issues of female athletes and sports and the media as well as the theory and frameworks underlying the study in general.

Chapter 3

METHODOLOGY

3.0 Introduction

This chapter describes the data of the study and explains the procedures taken to analyse the data collected from *The Star*. The data consists of reports about Nicol Ann David in the matches during the Women International Squash Players Association (WISPA) tournament season 2010. The sub-sections of this chapter include description and justification of data collection, the framework chosen and the stages of the data analysis.

3.1 Data

The data for this study was collected from *The Star*, the most-circulated and the most widely read, English–language daily in Malaysia and the sampling of the data was taken during the Women International Squash Players Association (WISPA) tournaments season 2010. The subject of the study is *Nicol Ann David, the Malaysian World No. 1 ranked squash queen* and as such, sports reports about her in *The Star* were the data for this study. The media selection, the sampling of the data and the subject of the study will be further described in the following sub-sections.

3.1.1 The Media - The Star

Malaysia has three major English-language dailies; *The Star, The New Straits Times* and *The Sun*. Among the three, *The Star* has become the most circulated and the most widely-read daily since the 90s (hhtp://thestar.com.my/info & Audit Bureau of Circulation, 2010*)*. First published on 9 September 1971, *The Star* started off as a regional newspaper based in Georgetown, Penang. Not only it is the first tabloid

published, *The Star* is also the first English-language daily printed using the web-offset process.

The circulation of *The Star* grew very rapidly for the next five years and in its sixth year of publication *The Star* became Penang's premier newspaper, surpassing the then 139-year-old *The News Straits Times*. *The Star* went national on 3rd January 1976 after the former Prime Minister, Tunku Abdul Rahman Putra Al-Haj joined the board of *Star Publication (M) Berhad* as the chairman. Two years later, the board agreed to move the headquarters from Penang to Kuala Lumpur.

Today, *The Star* is a 3-in-1 newspaper comprising the *Main Paper* - a section which covers up-to-date local and international news; *StarBiz* - a section where readers can expect comprehensive coverage of business issues; and finally *StarTwo* - a section on leisure reading that covers aspects such as lifestyle, entertainment, food, fashion, health etc *(The Star :* http://thestar.com.my/info/thestar.asp *& The Star Online (*http://thestar.com.my/info*)*

There are 286 409 copies of The Star circulated all over Malaysia and there are 1, 006, 000 readers. It has by far surpassed the circulation and readership of *The New Straits Times* which was circulated at 109 342 copies with 236 000 readers in 2010. (*Source: Audit Bureau of Circulations, Malaysia - 1 July 2009 - 30 June 2010 & Nielsen Media Index-January - December, 2010).* With such comprehensive coverage, *The Star* has become the most-circulated newspaper. It is for this very apparent reason that the study identifies *The Star* as the media for data collection.

3.1.2 The Subject – Nicol Ann David

Nicol Ann David was born on 26 August 1983 in Penang. She started playing squash as early as 5 years old. At 8, Nicol started her formal training at Bukit Dumbar sports Centre where her talent was spotted by Miss Ee Phoeh Hoon. She then was

chosen to represent the state in 1992, at the age of 9 along with her two sisters Liane and Cheryl.

In 1994, Nicol, aged 11, won her first 2 international wins; one in Hong Kong under-13 tournament and in the Scottish Junior Open Under-12 tournament. For her extraordinary speed and agility, she is nicknamed *Duracell Bunny*. She became the centre of attraction when she won the Asian Championship as well as being the youngest player to become the World's Female Junior Champion when she was 15. She was also the first and the only player to win the junior championship twice in 1997 and 2001. Her dominance, nevertheless, was broken in 2007 by Raneem El Weleily of Egypt and both became the only two players in the squash history to have achieved that.

By the age of 16, she was already making the world's-top-10 list. She joined Women International Squash Players Association (WISPA) and turned pro in 2000. She only took exactly a month to bag her very first WISPA title at Savcor Finnish Open.

She was the youngest squash world champion when she bagged the gold medal at the World Open in Germany in 2005 when she was only 21. She became the centre of attraction again in 2005 when she bagged Female's CIMB Malaysian Open Squash Championship title and became the very first local player to do that in the event's 31-year history. Her grip to the top strengthened when she became the first Malaysian and the first Asian woman to bag the British Open title in 2006.

When she was 23, Nicol notched another history when she became the World's number one female squash player in January 2006. She was also marked as the first Malaysian and the first Asian woman to have claimed that highest rank in the sports. Table 3.1 below summarizes her achievements from 2005 to 2009.

Table 3.1: Summary of Nicol Ann David's Achievement since becoming
the World No. 1 in January 2006 till December 2009.

Year	*Achievement*
2005, 2006, 2008, 2009	WORLD OPEN
2006, 2007, 2008	BRITISH OPEN
2006, 2007, 2008, 2009	HONG KONG OPEN
2007, 2008	QATAR CLASSIC
2005, 2006, 2007, 2008, 2009	WISPA PLAYER OF THE YEAR

In January 2010, Nicol started off as the World No. 1 for 42 consecutive months. She bagged all 9 WISPA tournament titles from the tournaments she participated in that year.

To date, she has bagged 50 WISPA titles and Nicol threatens to take a strong grip on the top ranking for a while to come. Besides, Nicol also has been ranked the World No. 1 for almost five years, beginning August 2006 to December 2010. (source: www.squashsite.co.uk and www.wispa.net). Table 3.2 summarizes Nicol's continuous achievement in 2010. In 2010, she participated in 9 WISPA tournaments and bagged all 9 titles.

Table 3.2: Summary of Nicol's Achievement in 2010 season

No	Achievement – CHAMPION
1	QATAR CLASSIC SQUASH CHAMPIONSHIP
2	TORNEO INTERNATIONAL BICENTENARIO MEXICO
3	THE SOHO SQUARE FEMALE'S WORLD OPEN
4	CATHAY PACIFIC SUN HUNG KAI FINANCIAL HONG KONG SQUASH OPEN
5	CIMB SINGAPORE FEMALE'S SQUASH MASTERS
6	CIMB MALAYSIAN OPEN
7	CAYMAN ISLANDS OPEN
8	CIMB KL OPEN SQUASH CHAMPIONSHIP
9	CHENNAI OPEN

As of March 2011 (http://www.squashsite.co.uk/2009/rankings.htm)

3.1.3 The Sampling – Reports on Nicol Ann David

The data for this research which are news reports from the sports Section of *The Star,* was collected from March 2010 –November 2010, the months when Nicol was competing in 9 Women's International Player Association (WISPA) tournaments for the 2010 season.

This time frame was chosen for various reasons. Firstly, the tournament she participated during this time would determine her points for her ranking. Secondly, 2010 was historical for Nicol and the squash world as this year marked her winning the World Open title for the fifth time, the year she bagged all nine WISPA tournament titles and October 2010 also marked her 50th successive month at the top of the world rankings. Thus, this is when she is claimed as the most successful Malaysian female squash player of all time (www.squashsite.co.uk). All the reports about Nicol throughout the nine months in 2010 were used as data for the analysis.

3.2 Framework of Analysis

The *Framing Theory* of Goffman (1974) provides the theoretical framework for the data analysis of the verbal texts and Kian's *Framework of Descriptive Categories of Framing Athletes* (2006) is used to describe how Nicol Ann David is being framed linguistically in *The* Star reports during the Women International Squash Player Tournament season 2010. The visuals that accompany the reports will be analysed using the *Interaction Analysis* of Kress and Van Leeuwen (1999).

3.2.1 Frame Analysis

The term *Framing* was introduced by Goffman in his book *An Essay on the Organisation of Experience* in 1974. Nevertheless, the theory was not systematically

organised. Subsequent research on Framing, thus, would suggest a more refined definition of *Framing.*

Entman et. al. (1993) highlighted that the most general definition of *Framing* follows Gamson and Modigliani (1987) who defined *Framing* as the *central organizing idea or story line that provides meanings to an unfolding strip of events*. Chong & Druckman (2007) further defines *Framing* as the process by which people develop a particular conceptualization of an issue of a figure.

Hence, *Framing* in this study, is defined as the *central organizing idea or story line that provides meanings to an unfolding strip of events by which people develop a particular conceptualization of an issue of a figure*, that is, in this study, *Nicol Ann David* as *the Malaysian World No. 1 squash player*.

Framing allows communicators to systematically put vast information into a well-defined context by constructing frames or reference of some issues, people or objects. These frames or references provide information for the public to grasp the meanings and take appropriate actions whenever possible. A frame limits the message's meaning by shaping the inferences that individuals make about the message. They reflect judgements made by message communicators (Chong & Druckman, 2006, Entman 1993, De Vreese, 2005). *Frames,* in this study, therefore, are present to endorse and advocate the conceptualization of Nicol as determined by the communicators who are the journalists.

Gamson and Modigliani (1989) outlined 5 devices used to examine frames in the text which are; *metaphor, exemplars, catchphrases, depictions* and *icons. Framing* of *Nicol Ann David* as *the Malaysian World No. 1 squash player* will be analysed using two of Gamson and Modigliani's frame devices; *depictions* and *icons*. In this study, *depictions* of Nicol, that is, all nouns/noun phrases and adjectives/adjective phrases in reference to Nicol in the reports will be used in the analysis. The study choose to

analyse nouns as it will provide information on what Nicol is referred to while adjectives will give information on how Nicol is described. As there were very few metaphors and catchphrases found in the reports, these will not be used in the analysis. The nouns and adjectives will be categorised based on Kian's *Framework of Descriptive Categories of Framing Athletes* (2006). Table 3.3 lists the 9 categories proposed by Kian.

Table 3.3: Descriptive Categories of Framing Athletes (Kian, 2006)

No	Coding	Categories
1	A	Physical appearance/sexuality/attire
2	B	Athletic prowess/strengths
3	C	Athletic weakness/limitations
4	D	Positive skill level/accomplishments
5	E	Negative skill level/ failures
6	F	Family role/personal relationships
7	G	Psychological strengths/emotional strengths
8	H	Psychological weaknesses/emotional weaknesses
9	I	Humour

Kian (2006) in his PhD thesis, *Masculine Hegemony in March Madness: A Textual Analysis of Gendered-language used by Newspaper and Online sports writers covering NCAA Women's and Men's Basketball Tournaments,* outlined 9 descriptive categories; *(1) physical appearance, (2) strengths, (3) limitations, (4) accomplishments, (5) failures, (6) personal relationships, (7) emotional strengths, (8) emotional weaknesses* and *(9) humour* when analysing reports on NCAA tournaments. This study will adopt all the categories in analysing the depictions of Nicol in the verbal texts.

3.2.2 Visual Analysis

The analysis will then examine the *icons* that accompanied the reports using Kress and Van Leeuwen's framework of visual analysis specifically *Interaction*

Analysis (1999). In this study, the interaction analysis will only discuss *contact* and *social distance* aspect of the analysis. Another aspect of interaction analysis, *power*, will not be discussed as the aim of the study is focused on the representation of Nicol to her readers.

Contact, according to Kress and Van Leeuwen (1999) refers to whether there is eye contact between participant and viewers; *Nicol and the readers*. Should there be any, it signifies that there is a demand of establishing relations between them while if there is none, the image is described as offering information (Kress and van Leeuwen, 2006).

Table 3.4: The Contact Signifier and Signified Meaning

Interaction	Signifier	Signified Meaning
Contact	eye contact	Signifies the establishment of connection between participant and viewers (i.e. readers).
	no eye contact	Signifies there is no establishment of connection between participant and the viewers (i.e. readers) but the image is offering information.

Social distance on the other hand, refers to the type of social relationships established between Nicol and the readers. This is realized by observing the types of shots used as each shot signifies different relations as summarized in Table 3.5 below;

Table 3.5: Social Distance Signifiers and Signified Meanings

Interaction	Signifier	Signified Meaning
Social distance	Close shot/close-up (head to shoulder)	Signifies intimacy between participant (i.e. Nicol) and viewers (i.e. readers)
	medium close shot (waist and above)	Signifies distant personal relationship.
	medium shot (knees and above)	Signifies close social relationship
	medium long shot (full figure)	Signifies distant relationship
	long shot (full figure is half of the height of whole frame)	Signifies public distant, stranger relationship.

Table 3.5 outlined the possible shots of visuals and the signified meaning they have in establishing the social distance between the participants and the viewers. There are five shots altogether. The first one is a *close shot* or *close up*, where the image shows the participants' body between head to shoulder. This type of shot signifies intimacy between the participant, *Nicol* and the viewers and in this study, between Nicol and readers of *The Star*. The second is *medium close shot*, signified by the image that shows participants' body from waist and above. This shot signifies distant personal relationship. The third is *medium shot*, where it shows participants' knees and above. This shot signifies close social relationship. The fourth is *medium long shot* with the full figure of the image as the signifier. This shot signifies distant relationship, and finally the *long shot*, signified also by the full figure but the size is half the height of the whole frame. This shot signifies the public distance and between 'strangers' relationship.

3.3 Data Analysis

3.3.1 Data

The data of this study were collected from *The Star*, between March and November 2010. 45 reports on Nicol throughout the nine tournaments that she participated were gathered and they were as follows:

Table 3.6: Summary of Reports Content of all Tournaments Nicol Participated

Report date	*Report Content*	*Tournament & Dates*
28 Feb	Preview of the whole tournament reporting the possible contenders Nicol would face	Chennai Open (1st title for 2010 season) *4 – 7 March 2010*
4 Mar	Preview of the first day and listing of the contenders.	
5 Mar	Review and result of the qualifying match	
6 Mar	Review and result of quarter-final match	
7 Mar	Review and result of semi-final match	
8 Mar	Review and result of the final match	
18 Mar	Review and result of qualifying match	CIMB KL Open Squash Championship (6th title) *17 – 20 March 2010*
19 Mar	Review and result of quarter-final match	
20 Mar	Review and result of semi-final match	
21 Mar	Review and result of the final match	
16 Apr	Review and result of qualifying match	Cayman Islands Open (2nd title) *13 – 17 April 2010*
17 Apr	Review and result of quarter-finals match	
18 Apr	Review and result of semi-finals match	
19 Apr	Review and result of the final match	
21 Jul	Preview of the tournament and the upcoming tournaments of the second half of the year and the achievements she had in the first half of the year.	CIMB Malaysian Open (6th consecutive title) *21 – 24 July 2010*
23 Jul	Review and result of the quarter-final match	
24 Jul	Review and result of semi-finals match	
25 Jul	Review and result of the final match	

Table 3.6, continued

Date	Content	Tournament
26 Jul	Review of the previous tournament and the preview of the upcoming tournament	CIMB Singapore Women's Squash Masters (5th title) *28 – 31 July 2010*
29 Jul	Review and result of qualifying match	
30 Jul	Review and result of quarter-final match	
31 Jul	Review and result of semi-final match	
1 Aug	Review and result of the final match	
2 Aug	Detailed review of the final match	
23 Aug	World Open pre-preview	Hong Kong Open (5th title) *25 – 29 August 2010*
26 Aug	Review and result of qualifying match round 1	
27 Aug	Review and result of qualifying match round 2	
28 Aug	Review and result of quarter-final match	
29 Aug	Review and result of semi-final match	
30 Aug	Review and result of the final match	
17 Sept	World Open preview	The Soho Square Women's World Open (5th title) *18 – 22 September 2010*
21 Sept	Review and result of qualifying match	
22 Sept	Review and result of quarter-final match	
23 Sept	Review and result of the final match with information on the semi finals.	
24 Sept	World Open Review	
23 Oct	Review and result of qualifying match	Torneo International Bicentenario, Mexico (8th consecutive WISPA title in 2010) *20 – 24 October 2010*
24 Oct	Review and result of quarter-final match	
25 Oct	Review and result of semi-final match	
26 Oct	Review and result of the final match	
8 Nov	Qatar Classic preview	Qatar Classic Squash Championship (3rd Title) *8 – 12 November 2010*
9 Nov	Review and result of qualifying match round 1	
10 Nov	Review and result of qualifying match round 2	
11 Nov	Review and result of quarter-final match	
12 Nov	Review and result of semi-final match	
13 Nov	Review and result of the final match	

Table 3.6 shows a summary of the 45 data collected for the study. The table tabulated the report dates, the content and the name and the dates of the tournaments Nicol participated. All reports were published in Kuala Lumpur and circulated in Malaysia. At a glance, it can be summarized that there were nine major tournaments in 2010 that Nicol participated namely in; *Chennai Open* which took place between *4 – 7 March 2010, CIMB Kuala Lumpur Open Squash Championship (17 – 20 March 2010), Cayman Islands Open (13 – 17 April 2010), CIMB Malaysian Open (21 – 24*

July 2010) CIMB Singapore Women's Squash Masters (28 – 31 July 2010), Hong Kong Open (25 – 29 August 2010), The Soho Square Women's World Open (18 – 22 September 2010) Torneo International Bicentenario Mexico Open (20 – 24 October 2010) and *Qatar Classic Squash Championship (8 – 12 November 2010).*

It is interesting to note that the number of the reports that covered each tournament varies. *Chennai Open, Singapore Open, Hong Kong Open* and *Qatar Classic Championship* had six reports covering each event. Five reports covering *World Open* were published and there were four reports each published covering *Kuala Lumpur Open, Cayman Islands Open, Malaysian Open* and *Mexico Open*. It is assumed that the tournaments that had more coverage were the ones that were either critical or exclusive tournaments.

Chennai Open marked the beginning of the journey to secure World No. 1 title for Nicol in 2010. This was also because in 2009, Nicol lost her opening WISPA tournament title which was the Kuala Lumpur Open. Thus, it was hoped that the loss would not be repeated and 2010 opening tournament would be an excellent opportunity for Nicol to set the right momentum for the year. The *Singapore Open* also had six reports as it marked the half year of the whole competing year for Nicol. The coverage thus began on the *26 July 2010* where the report published was the review of the previous four tournaments that she had won for the year and the preview of the upcoming tournaments for the remaining of the year where Nicol was very hopeful to win and defend her titles particularly the World Open title. The *Hong Kong Open* received the highest coverage because it was presumed that the title of the tournament would be a substantial support in boosting Nicol's motivation and determination to compete in the most significant tournament of the year, the World Open tournament. This could possibly be that the World Open title of 2010 marked her third consecutive World Open title and fifth time win since she turned pro in 2000. The impact of the

World Open in a squash player's record, particularly Nicol, can be seen when the coverage for the tournament began almost a month before the event took place in September 2010 at the Soho Square, Egypt. The World Open pre-preview was reported as early as *23 August 2010* before the commencing of the *Hong Kong Open*. During the *Hong Kong Open*, the review and results of the matches were given in detail since the qualifying match round 1 as it was deemed to set the desirable determination for World Open title quest. This is also believed to enable readers to confide in Nicol that she was ready for her fifth World Open title. The final tournament that was covered in six reports was the *Qatar Classic Squash Championship*. This was Nicol's final WISPA tournament for season 2010. It started off with the preview, the review and results of qualifying match round 1 and 2, quarter-final match, semi-final match and final match. Marked the end of WISPA tournaments season 2010 for Nicol, it was also the last tournament that had 32 players draw after the Hong Kong Open and the World Open.

The *World Open* tournament was covered by another five reports after the pre-preview on *23 August 2010* of which was published on *17 September 2010*. *21 – 23 September 2010* reports were the review and results of each match from the qualifying to the final match. The significance of the tournament was again amplified when it happened to be the only tournament that had the *overall review* report published on *24 September 2010*, two days after the tournament was concluded on *22 September 2010*.

Other than these, the other four tournaments namely *Kuala Lumpur Open, Cayman Islands Open, Malaysian Open* and *Mexico Open*, were covered routinely in the form of the review and the results of qualifying round match to the final. Despite that, there were some findings that deemed forethought where *Cayman Islands Open, Malaysian Open* and *Mexico Open* matches and results of the first match were only reported two days after the actual start. For *Cayman Open* and *Mexico Open*, the rationale for publishing the first report for the tournaments two days later could possibly

due to the physical distance between the two places, *Kuala Lumpur and Cayman Islands* and *Kuala Lumpur and Mexico*. However, as of *Malaysian Open*, a local tournament which was also reported two days later than the actual commencing date and covered reviews and results only from quarter-final matches onwards, the study assumed that the late reporting was due to Nicol was already expected to win the tournament as she had been winning from the first tournament and the fact that the tournament was a home tournament made it a more convincing expected win. Therefore, it is not important to report immediately.

3.3.2 Analysis of Depictions

This section will describe the stages in the analysis of sports news reports on Nicol Ann David. There are 3 major stages which are; 1) analysing nouns/noun phrases, 2) analysing adjectives/adjective phrases and 3) analysing visuals.

3.3.2.1 Analysing Nouns/Noun Phrases

All the nouns/noun phrases found in the extracts were tabulated according to tournament in the first stage of the analysis. This is followed by tabling all the nouns/noun phrases used in the reports. This step was conducted to code the nouns/noun phrases in the reports based on Kian's descriptive categories. The nouns/noun phrases of similar categories were then tabulated to observe the emerging patterns of Nicol's frames. The rationale for conducting the analysis as such is to examine if other possible frames apart from Kian's were used to frame Nicol. It, hence, needs every possible detail of the matches of the different tournaments in the season to determine whether new frames could be established apart from those identified by Kian.

3.3.2.2 : Analysing Adjectives/Adjective Phrases

The second stage of the analysis deals with the adjectives/adjective phrases used to depict Nicol Ann David in the WISPA tournaments season 2010. There were four main steps carried out to analyse these adjectives/adjectives phrases used in all the reports. The first step was to extract the adjective/adjective phrases used in every report of every tournament (Appendix A), for example, *who is gunning to win the title for the sixth time*, *who is gunning for her fourth consecutive Singapore Masters crown* and *who is seeking to claim a sixth WISPA tournament this season; off guard, troubled* and *under pressure; Four-time world champion, defending champion* and *World Champion.* In the second step, the phrases were then coded based on the categories established by Kian (Appendix B). This coding process is carried out by coders who are the graduates of Media Discourse Analysis. Coding sheets are compared to get the final agreement (Appendix C). This is followed by the third step where the frequency of occurrence is counted. Finally, the tabulation will observe the emerging patterns of descriptions of Nicol.

It is also imperative to note that, some adjectives/adjective phrases used would seem to overlap with the nouns/noun phrases. They, however, are different based on their grammatical positioning in the sentences. In the sentence; *The Penangite will open the tournament against a qualifier*, the *'Penangite'* is a noun that functions as a subject of the sentence. However, in the sentence; *Nicol, the Penangite will open the tournament against a qualifier*, the *'Penangite'* is an adjective modifying the noun, *Nicol*. Thus, these nouns/noun phrases and adjectives/adjective phrases differ from each other in terms of their grammatical positioning in the sentences.

3.3.3 Analysis of Icons/Images

The term *icon* was used by Gamson and Modigliani (1989) *to denote the visual images in their analysis of brochure and pamphlets* (Chang, 2009). In this study, the term *icon* refers to the visual images that are present in the texts. Shirato and Yell (2000) claimed that visuals enhance the credibility of a text where they help readers to understand the content of the text better. In this study, there are 16 icons used to accompany the reports on Nicol throughout the season. Table 3.7 summarizes the 16 icons used and the dates of the reports they accompanied.

Table 3.7: Icons used to accompany the reports on Nicol in 2010 season

Icon 1 8 Mar	Icon 2 20 Mar	Icon 3 21 Mar & 23 Sept	Icon 4 16 & 17 Apr
Icon 5 24 July	Icon 6 25 July	Icon 7 29 July & 17 Sept	Icon 8 1 Aug
Icon 9 2 Aug	Icon 10 23 Aug	Icon 11 28 Aug	Icon 12 30 Aug

Table 3.7, continued

Icon 13 21 Sept 2010	Icon 14 24 Sept 2010	Icon 15 8 & 13 Nov 2010	Icon 16 10 Nov 2010

Table 3.7 shows that there are 16 icons used to accompany the reports on Nicol during the tournaments. However, icons 3, 4, 7 and 15 were used twice in the reports. As such, in total 20 icons/images were used with the reports on Nicol. From the table also we can see that each icon was shot at different angles. Thus, Kress and Van Leeuwen's Interaction Analysis (1999) was adopted for analysing *icons*. *Interaction Analysis* of Kress and Van Leeuwen (1999) was chosen because this particular analysis allows researchers to examine the type of contact and social distance established between Nicol, in the images and the viewers. In this study, interaction analysis deemed to assist in finding whether images in the reports complement the linguistic depictions of Nicol. *Contact*, will establish the kinds of images whether they are *demand* or *offer* images. *Demand* image means the participant is looking at the viewers, as if she is demanding the viewers to enter *into some kind of imaginary relations* (Kress and Van Leeuwen, 2006) with her. *Offer* images, on the other hand, the participant is not looking at the viewers but seems to offer information to the viewers. *Social distance* will establish different kind of relationships ranging from close personal relationship to distant stranger relationship. By identifying the kind of images and their meanings through contact and social distance analyses, it will help the study to determine whether they complement Kian's framing categories such as *athletic prowess and weakness*, *positive and negative skill level* as well as *family role/personal relationships* and *psychological*

strengths and weaknesses. Hence, interaction analysis is considered as the most suitable visual analysis to complement the frame analysis.

3.3.3.1 Analysing Contact and Social Distance

The first step in the analysis involves coding all the icons listed in Table 3.7 in terms of contact according to the description in Table 3.4 and presented in Appendix B. The images will also be accordingly coded in terms of social distance based on the descriptors in Table 3.5 (Appendix B)

Examples of *contact* and social distance are provided in the following paragraphs.

Icon 4	Icon 14
No eye contact	With eye contact

Icon 4 shows that there is no eye contact involved in this image which signifies that Nicol does not establish any connection with the viewers. This image is thus, an *offer* image providing information about the icon portrayed (Kress and Van Leeuwen, 2006)

Icon 14 shows that there is eye contact involved in this image which signifies establishment of connection between Nicol and the viewers. Therefore, this image is a

demand image, where we can see that Nicol is looking at the viewers as if demanding the viewers to share *some kind of imaginary relation* (Kress & Van Leeuwen, 2006)

The following two icons are the examples of the different shots of the icons used to accompany the reports on Nicol during the tournaments.

Icon 1	Icon 7
Medium shot	Medium close shot

Icon 1 is a medium shot image where Nicol's image shows knees and above. This kind of shot signifies that there is a close social relationship between Nicol and the viewers. Icon 7 on the contrary, is a medium close shot where Nicol's image shows waist and above. This kind of shot signifies distant personal relationship between Nicol and her viewers.

In the second step of the analysis, the number of icons that establish contact and that do not establish contact was noted. Subsequently, the number of icons that were coded according to the type of shots of the icons was also calculated. The next stage was to tabulate the frequency and percentage of the icons' shot types and the signified meanings.

3.4 Reliability of Findings

To ensure the reliability of findings, two other coders with Media Discourse Analysis background will repeat the coding steps in both lexical and visual analysis carried out

by the researcher. For lexical analysis coding, each coder was given 1 form which listed all nouns/noun phrases and adjectives/adjective phrases used to depict Nicol. They were requested to categorise the items according to the frames established by the researcher (Appendix C). All findings were then tabulated in table. Any discrepancies will be discussed and the final agreement was tabulated in a new table in Appendix D. For the visual analysis, the two other coders would repeat stage 2 and 3 in the forms provided by the researcher (Appendix C). The findings were then summarized in a different table. Any discrepancies were discussed and the final results were agreed as presented in table in Appendix E. This step is essential to ensure that the findings are validated (Kian, 2006).

Intercoder reliability is calculated to assess the degree in which the analysis can be reproduced by others. The study adopts Holsti' (1969) method that uses the formula given to determine the reliability of data in terms of percentage of agreement:

$$\text{Reliability} = \frac{2M}{N1 + N2}$$

where M is the number of coding decisions on which the two coders agree, and *N1* and *N2* are the total number of coding decisions by the first and second coder, respectively. The minimum reliability coefficient accepted for this method is about 90% (Wimmer and Dominick, 2000) and the coefficient calculated for the two coders of the study is found to be .91. Thus, the coding is described as reliable.

3.5 Conclusion

This chapter has briefly described the data and the stages carried out to analyse the data collected for the study. Each sub-section has clearly defined the steps to be carried out in analysing the linguistic and non-linguistic features found in the data.

Chapter 4

Analysis and Findings

4.0 Introduction

This chapter presents the analysis of the data collected from *The Star*, the most widely read English-language Malaysian daily from March to November 2010, the months when the Women International Squash Players Association (WISPA) Tournaments season 2010 took place. These tournaments determined Nicol's points for her world ranking.

The following sections reveal the result of the analysis. The first section reveals the analysis and findings of the lexical analysis on nouns/noun phrases and adjectives/adjective phrases. *Table 4.1 – Table 4.9* show the nouns/noun phrases extracted according to the tournaments, *Table 4.10* shows the tabulation of nouns/noun phrases frequency and percentage and *Table 4.11* shows the emerging frames from the findings. *Table 4.12* shows the summary of depictions of Nicol using adjectives/adjective phrases and the frequency of occurrence, while *Table 4.13* shows the tabulation of Nicol's depictions using adjectives/adjective phrases according to Kian's Descriptive Categories of Framing Athletes (2006). Finally, *Table 4.14* shows the findings of adjectives/adjective phrases according to Kian's categories with the frequency and percentage of occurrence.

The analysis of the linguistic elements, nouns and adjectives and the visuals will be discussed in terms of Kian's framing categories.

The second section of the chapter will describe the visual analysis of the images that accompany the reports on Nicol. The icons were analysed in 2 of 3 elements of *Interaction Analysis* (Kress & van Leeuwen, 1999), *contact* and *distance.* Table 4.15 shows the number of icons found in the reports and the presence of contact for each icon. Table 4.16 shows the tabulation of frequency and percentage of contact

occurrences. This is followed by Table 4.17, where it shows the tabulation of icons shot types and the signified social distance and finally, Table 4.18 tabulated the frequency and percentage of shot types and the signified social distance.

4.1 DATA ANALYSIS

The section consists of two sub-sections which are *depictions* and *icons*. Both sections will reveal the frames used to frame Nicol Ann David in the news reports of matches in the 2010 WISPA tournaments in *The Star*.

4.1.1 Depictions

In this section, the *depictions* used to describe Nicol Ann David throughout the season will be analysed. The analysis of two linguistic items; nouns and adjectives, used to depict Nicol in the reports on the matches for 9 tournaments in 2010 season will be described.

4.1.1.1 Depictions 1: Nouns/Noun phrases

The following section reveals the result of the lexical analysis of nouns/noun phrases. Tables 4.1 - Table 4.9 show the nouns/noun phrases extracted from the reports according to the tournaments. There were nine tournaments in 2010 in which Nicol participated.

Table 4.1: Frequency of nouns/nouns phrases used to describe Nicol
in the Chennai Open

Dates	Nouns/Noun Phrases			
	Nicol David	**Nicol**	**the Malaysian**	**the Penangite**
Feb 28	1	12		1
Mar 4	1	8		1
Mar 5	1	1		
Mar 6	1	1		1
Mar 7	1	4	1	
Mar 8	1	4		
Total	*6*	*30*	*1*	*3*
Grand total	*40*			

Table 4.1 summarizes the nouns/noun phrases used to refer to Nicol Ann David in the first tournament, *Chennai Open* which was held from *4 to 7 March 2010* in Chennai, India. From the table, it can be seen that there are four nouns/noun phrases used which are *Nicol David, Nicol, the Malaysian* and *the Penangite*. There are a total of 40 occurrences of the four depictions used in this tournament. There are 6 occurrences of *Nicol David*, 30 occurrences of *Nicol*, 1 of *the Malaysian* and 3 of *the Penangite* with the noun *Nicol,* occurring the most frequently. 12 occurrences of *Nicol* in the first report was the highest occurring noun as compared to other reports possibly because of the length of the report being longer as it was the opening report for the 2010 season. While the single occurrence in both 5 and 6 March 2010 reports is also due to the rather shorter length of the reports and the focus of the reports was on all matches in the round and not only on Nicol.

Table 4.2: Frequency of nouns/nouns phrases used to describe Nicol
in the CIMB KL Open Squash Championship

Dates	Nouns/Noun Phrases			
	Nicol David	Nicol	the Malaysian	the Penangite
Mar 18	1	7		
Mar 19	2	5		
Mar 20	1	9		
Mar 21	1	11	1	1
Total	5	32	1	1
Grand total	39			

Table 4.2 reveals that there were also four depictions used to refer to Nicol in the CIMB KL Open Squash Championship from 18 – 21 March 2010, in Kuala Lumpur. The depictions are *Nicol David, Nicol, the Malaysian* and *the Penangite* and there is a total of 39 occurrences. The noun *Nicol* is the most frequently occurring depiction with 32 occurrences as compared to other nouns/noun phrases. The other nouns/noun phrases, *Nicol David,* was used 5 times while *the Malaysian* and *the Penangite* were used once each respectively.

Table 4.3: Frequency of nouns/nouns phrases used to describe Nicol
in the Cayman Islands Open

Dates	Nouns/Noun Phrases						
	Nicol David	Nicol	the M'sian	the Penangite	the Defending Champion	the World No 1	the World Champion
Apr 16	1	2	1	1			
Apr 17	1	6			1		
Apr 18	1	6				1	
Apr 19	1	8		1			1
Total	4	22	1	2	1	1	1
Grand total	32						

Table 4.3 tabulated 7 different nouns/noun phrases used to refer to Nicol in the *Cayman Islands Open* that took place on 16-19 April 2010 in Cayman Islands. There are a total of 32 occurrences. Besides the regularly occurring nouns *Nicol David, Nicol,*

the Malaysian and *the Penangite* in the reports of the previous tournaments, Nicol was also depicted as *the defending champion, the World No. 1* and *the world champion* with each occurring once. These depictions are present in this particular tournament as proof that she is *the defending champion, the World No. 1* and *the world champion* as she had won the previous two tournaments in style and might continue winning as a third winning streak in sports marked a hat-trick which always seems tricky. Furthermore, winning *CIMB Malaysian Open* title this year would mark her 6th consecutive year of winning the title thus the noun *the defending champion*. Other than that, there are 4 occurrences of *Nicol David,* 22 of *Nicol,* 1 of *the Malaysian* and 2 of *the Penangite*. *Nicol* as observed earlier was also the highest occurring depiction. Yet, in the first report on *16 April 2010*, interestingly, there were only two occurrences of *Nicol* as compared to others which were *6 on 17 April*, another *6 on 18 April* and *8 on 19 April*. This could possibly be because of the nature of the report where the first report covered all matches in the round and thus, it was relatively short and concise.

Table 4.4: Frequency of nouns/nouns phrases used to describe Nicol
in CIMB Malaysian Open

Dates	Nouns/Noun Phrases		
	Nicol David	**Nicol**	**the Penangite**
Jul 21	1	9	1
Jul 23	1	6	1
Jul 24	1	10	1
Jul 25	1	14	
Total	*4*	*39*	*3*
Grand Total	*46*		

Table 4.4 tabulated Nicol's depiction in another home tournament, the *CIMB Malaysian Open* which commenced on *21 July 2010* and concluded on *24 July 2010* in Kuala Lumpur. It is a yet another noteworthy finding where there were only 3 depictions used to refer to Nicol, *Nicol David, Nicol* and *the Penangite*. Just like in the

previous tournaments *Nicol* remains the highest occurring depiction with a total of 39 occurrences. With almost 85% domination of *Nicol* in the reports, it is again presumed that the noun *Nicol,* when reporting a home tournament is to reduce the social distance between Nicol and her readers. This is assumed as such due to the first name reference used. In terms of social status, the use of her first name *Nicol* instead of *Nicol David* closes the social distance with the readers.

Table 4.5 summarizes the nouns/noun phrases used in the reports of CIMB Singapore Women's Squash Masters 2010 on 29 July till 2 August 2010 which took place in Singapore.

Table 4.5: Frequency of nouns/nouns phrases used to describe Nicol
in CIMB Singapore Women's Squash Masters

Dates	Nouns/Noun Phrases				
	Nicol David	Nicol	the Malaysian	the Penangite	the top seed
Jul 26	1	9		1	
Jul 29	1	1		1	
Jul 30	1	10			
Jul 31	1	7	1		1
Aug 1	1	9	1	1	
Aug 2	1	14			
Total	*6*	*50*	*2*	*3*	*1*
Grand Total	*62*				

There are 5 depictions with 62 occurrences tabulated; *Nicol David* (6)*, Nicol* (50)*, the Malaysian* (2)*, the Penangite* (3) and *the top seed* (1). As seen in the previous 4 tournaments, *Nicol* is the highest occurring depiction as compared to the other four with 80% domination of the total depictions used. Despite being the highest occurring depiction, it is also interesting to note that, as compared to other reports, there was only 1 *Nicol* found in the report dated *29 July 2010* as compared to other reports that had *Nicol* repeated 9 (26 July), 10 (30 July), 7 (31 July), 9 (1 August) and 14 (2 August)

times respectively. This was again due to the length and the nature of the report where it was a brief review of a qualifying round match and therefore it had to cover every match in the tournament and thus *Nicol* is seldom referred to.

Table 4.6: Frequency of nouns/nouns phrases used to describe Nicol
in Hong Kong Open

Dates	Nouns/Noun Phrases					
	Nicol David	**Nicol**	**the M'sian**	**the Penangite**	**the Defending Champion**	**the World No 1**
Aug 23	1	7			1	
Aug 26	1	3				
Aug 27	1	5				1
Aug 28	1	2	1			
Aug 29	1	11		1		
Aug 30	1	9		1		
Total	*7*	*37*	*1*	*2*	*1*	*1*
Grand Total	*49*					

Table 4.6 tabulated the depictions used to describe Nicol in the *Hong Kong Open,* which took place in Hong Kong on 26 – 30 August 2011. There are 6 kinds of depictions with a total of 49 occurrences that were used namely *Nicol David, Nicol, the Malaysian, the Penangite, the defending champion* and *the World No. 1* with *Nicol* being the noun with the highest occurrence of about 76%. This tournament is the second tournament where depictions *the defending champion* and *the World No.1* were used after the *Cayman Islands Open*. This might be because the depictions *the defending champion* and *the World No.1* were used again to maintain Nicol's image for the upcoming event which was the most significant event of the season, the *World Open* tournament. It could also be most possibly because she has been winning the tournaments she participated so far.

Table 4.7: Frequency of nouns/nouns phrases used to describe Nicol
in The Soho Square Women's World Open

Dates	Nouns /Noun Phrases			
	Nicol David	**Nicol**	**the Malaysian**	**the Penangite**
Sept 17	1	7	1	
Sept 21	1	6		
Sept 22	1	7		
Sept 23	1	12		1
Sept 24	1	8		
Total	*5*	*40*	*1*	*1*
Grand Total	*47*			

Table 4.7 tabulated depictions of Nicol during the *Soho Square Women's World Open tournament*, which was held in Soho Square, Egypt. There are 4 different depictions of Nicol in the reports with a total occurrence of 47. The tabulation shows that Nicol was only depicted as *Nicol David, Nicol, the Malaysian* and *the Penangite*, with *Nicol* dominating 85% of the total occurrence. There is also an interesting result where in the most significant tournament in which Nicol participated and highly anticipated to win her fifth World title ,she was not depicted *as the World No. 1, the defending champion* or *the world champion*. The study, therefore, assumed that, Nicol was merely depicted as one of the competitors just like other players in the tournament in order to reduce the social distance between readers of the reports and between other players.

Table 4.8: Frequency of nouns/nouns phrases used to describe Nicol
in Torneo International Bincetenario Mexico Open

Dates	Nouns/Noun Phrases					
	Nicol David	**Nicol**	**the 27-year-old**	**the Penangite**	**the World No 1**	**the 5 time World Champion**
Oct 23	1	4				
Oct 24	1	3				
Oct 25	1	4			1	
Oct 26	1	6	1	1		1
Total	*4*	*17*	*1*	*1*	*1*	*1*
Grand Total	25					

Table 4.8 tabulated depiction of Nicol in the *Torneo International Bicenternario Mexico Open 2010* that took place between *20 -24 October 2010* in Mexico City. There are 6 depictions which are *Nicol David, Nicol, the 27-year-old, the Penangite, the World No. 1* and *the five time world champion.* These depictions occurred 25 times. Just like other reports of other tournaments, *Nicol* again dominated the occurrences with 68% dominance. *Nicol David* has 4 occurrences while the other depictions have one occurrence each. This is the first and only tournament in the season that had a report depicting Nicol as *the 27-year-old*. This could possibly be because the journalists would like to highlight her age to show that she is young and yet she is already a five-time world champion when the title was won about a month earlier.

Table 4.9: Frequency of nouns/nouns phrases used to describe Nicol
in Qatar Classic Squash Championship

Dates	Nouns/Noun Phrases			
	Nicol David	**Nicol**	**the Penangite**	**World No 1**
Nov 8	1	5	1	1
Nov 9	1	7		
Nov 10	1	8		
Nov 11	1	9	1	1
Nov 12	2	6		1
Nov 13	1	15	1	1
Total	*7*	*50*	*3*	*4*
Grand Total	*64*			

Table 4.9 tabulated the depictions used for Nicol in the final tournament of the season, the *Qatar Classic Squash Championship* which took place between *8 -12 November 2010* in Qatar. In the reports for this closing tournament, Nicol was depicted as *Nicol David, Nicol, the Penangite* and *the World No. 1* with a total of 64 occurrences of the nouns. Just like in the previous tournaments, depiction *Nicol* is used the most. In these reports on Qatar Classic tournament, depiction *Nicol* had 50 occurrences followed by *Nicol David (7), the World No. 1 (4)* and *the Penangite (3)*. It is remarkable that in this particular tournament, depiction *the World No. 1* had 4 occurrences as compared to the previous reports where *the World No. 1*, only occurred once in *Mexico Open, Hong Kong Open* and *Cayman Islands Open.* The study, hence, assumed that the depiction was as such because the journalists intended to reinforce that she was the greatest squash player being the World No. 1 who had her 9 consecutive win in her WISPA tournaments season 2010 which was also achieved in 2008.

All the nouns/noun phrases that occurred in every tournament were then tabled in Table 4.10 to examine the overall occurrence of nouns/noun phrases used to depict Nicol. The table also tabulated the total frequency and percentage of occurrences for each noun/noun phrase. Both observations on frequency and percentage of occurrence may provide an overall pattern of the nouns/noun phrases used in the reports.

Table 4.10: Tabulation of Nouns/Noun Phrases Frequency and Percentage

No.	Nouns/Noun Phrases	Frequency	%
1	Nicol	317	78.47
2	Nicol David	48	11.88
3	The Penangite	19	4.70
4	The Malaysian	7	1.73
5	The World No. 1/World No. 1	7	1.73
6	The defending champion	2	0.50
7	The world champion	1	0.25
8	The top seed	1	0.25
9	The five-time world champion	1	0.25
10	The 27-year-old Malaysian	1	0.25
		404	100.01

Based on Kian's descriptive categories of framing athletes (2006), it is found that some of the nouns/noun phrases were coded into the accomplishment frame. The remaining nouns/noun phrases however, could not be coded into any other frames established by Kian.

In the *accomplishment frame*, Nicol is depicted to as *the defending champion (2 occurrences), the World No. 1/World No. 1 (7 occurrences)* and other depictions such as *the world champion, the top seed* and *the five-time world champion* that occurred once (2.97%).

This study would like to introduce 2 new frames; the *personalization* and the *localization* frames which were not identified by Kian (2006) in his study. The first frame, *personalization* refers to the personal aspects of the athlete such as name and age. References to *Nicol, Nicol David* and *the 27-year-old* were categorised in the *personalization* frame. In this case, Nicol is her first name, Nicol David is her first name with the surname and the-27-year-old is her age. The second new frame, *localization*, refers to the nationality or place of origin of the subject in which references to *Malaysian* and *Penangite* were categorised in the *localization* frame. In this case, Nicol Ann David is a Malaysian who is from Penang. Thus, her nationality is Malaysian and place of origin is Penang.

Table 4.11: The Emerging frames from the findings

Personalization Frame (e.g. name, age)	Freq	%
Nicol David	48	
Nicol	317	90.59
The 27-year-old Malaysian	1	
	366	
Localization Frame (place of origin)		
The Malaysian	7	
The Penangite	19	6.44
	26	
Accomplishment Frame (ranking/titles)		
The defending champion	2	
The World No. 1/World No. 1	7	
The world champion	1	2.97
The top seed	1	
The five-time world champion	1	
	12	
		100

Table 4.11 shows the categorization of nouns/noun phrases used to depict Nicol Ann David in her WISPA tournaments season 2010. Therefore in summary, Nicol's reference in the 45 data collected can be organised into three main frames; *Personalization frame*, *localization frame* and *accomplishment frame*.

In the *personalization frame*, Nicol is referred to as *Nicol (317 occurrences), Nicol David (48 occurrences)* and *the 27-year-old Malaysian (1 occurrence)*. Nicol's personal depictions occurred 366 out of 404 nouns. This dominated 90.59% of the total percentage of the depictions used. While in the *localization frame*, Nicol is commonly depicted to as *the Penangite* or *the Malaysian* with each occurring 19 and 7 times respectively (6.44%).

Thus, it can be summarized that, Nicol's *personalization frame* dominated the occurrences with 90.59% of the total occurrences followed by her *localization frame* which makes up a 6.44% occurrence and finally her *accomplishment frame* which only makes up 2.97% of the occurrence. Hence, it can be concluded that references to Nicol

Ann David is usually on a personal, informal basis by the use of her first name, Nicol in most of the reports as compared to being framed as the national/international player or the player who has been dominating the squash world by standing at the highest ranking for more than 50 consecutive months. It can be also be concluded that the usage of *personalization frame* helps to establish a closer relationship between Nicol and her readers as compared to having her being placed as the highest-ranked player. It thus, reduces the social distance and social standing between Nicol and her readers.

4.1.1.2 Depictions 2 : Adjectives/Adjective Phrases

This section reveals the findings of the lexical analysis on adjectives/adjective phrases based on Kian's *framework on descriptive categories of framing athletes* (2006). From the 45 data collected, the study first extracted all adjectives/adjective phrases used by the journalists to depict Nicol throughout the tournaments for season 2010 (*Appendix A*). Subsequently, these adjectives/adjective phrases were coded and grouped in Table 4.12 according to Kian's categories and the frequency of occurrence was also noted. The table is as follows;

Table 4.12: Summary of Depictions of Nicol Ann David using Adjectives/Adjective Phrases and the Frequency of Occurrence

No	Depictions using Adjectives/Adjective Phrases	Freq
1	who is gunning to win the title for the sixth time	1
2	who is gunning for a sixth KL Open title	1
3	who is gunning for her sixth consecutive title	1
4	who will be gunning for a sixth consecutive title since 2005	1
5	who is gunning for her fourth consecutive Singapore Masters crown	1
6	who is gunning for her fifth Hong Kong Open crown	1
7	who is gunning for her ninth WISPA title in Doha	1
8	who is gunning for her fifth world title	2
9	who is seeking to claim a sixth WISPA tournament this season	1
10	who is unbeaten this year/ who is unbeaten thus far this year	3
11	who is unbeaten for her eighth WISPA title	1
12	who did not drop a single set in the tournament	1
13	who opens her campaign against a qualifier	1
14	who is using the tournament as a warm-up to the Guangzhou Asian Games next month	1
15	the raging favourite/the favourite	3
16	top seed/top seeded	6
17	a very good player	1
18	Focused	1
19	simply too good	1
20	smashing form	1
21	fine form	1
22	the experienced	1
23	est in the world	1
24	hardly ruffled	1
25	Supreme	1
26	who will skip the Australian Open	1
27	who admitted that she was still 'getting used to the court' yesterday	1
28	devastating form	1
29	Troubled	1
30	off guard	1
31	under pressure	1
32	Four-time world champion	13
33	defending champion	3
34	Defending women's champion	1
35	World Champion	1
36	Five-time world champion	1
37	Commonwealth Games champion	1
38	Malaysia's squash queen	2
39	Malaysian squash sensation	1
40	Squash superstar	1
41	who also won gold in the recent Delhi Commonwealth Games	1
42	who won the title three consecutive time since 2006	1
43	who bagged seven WISPA titles	1

Table 4.12 continued

44	who bagged the Chennai Open early this month	1
45	who bagged her fourth consecutive Singapore Open title	1
46	who also bagged her seventh consecutive Asian title in Chennai in May	1
47	who bagged her eighth title in last month's Torneo International Bincetenario in Mexico	1
48	who has bagged 47 titles since turning pro in 2000	2
49	who has 41 WISPA titles	1
50	who is ranked number one in the world since August 2006	1
51	who has been the world No.1 since August in 2006	3
52	the world number one since 2006/ranked No. 1 in the world since 2006	2
53	who has been the world number one ranked player since August 2006	1
54	the World No. 1/World No. 1/ World number one	26
55	Malaysia's World No. 1	2
56	whose win yesterday marked her sixth WISPA title this year	1
57	whose best achievement on the WISPA circuit was winning all 10 tournaments she competed in 2008	1
58	who finished fourth in the 2006 Games in Melbourne	1
59	who were upset by Perry in the quarter-finals of the British Open in their last meeting in September	1
60	The 26-year-old	1
61	Birthday girl	1
62	who turned 27	1
63	The 27-year-old	2
	Grand Total	**119**

Table 4.12 tabulated 63 depictions of adjectives/adjective phrases that were used to frame Nicol Ann David in the reports during the tournaments in season 2010. Out of 63 depictions, there are 119 occurrences in total. The phrase *the World No. 1/World No. 1/ World number one*, occurred the most with 26 occurrences in 45 reports. *Four time world champion* occurred 13 times and *top seed/top seeded* occurred 6 times, while the other 60 depictions occurred less than five times each.

The depictions were then categorised according to the descriptors (*Table 3.3*) established by Kian (2006) in his *framework of descriptive categories of framing athletes*. *Table 4.13* shows the tabulation of depictions of Nicol using adjectives/adjective phrases according to Kian's Descriptive Categories of Framing Athletes (2006). The results shown were the ones as agreed upon discussion with the other two coders. In the table, Depiction A refers to *physical*

appearance/sexuality/attire, depiction B refers to *athletic prowess/strengths*, depiction C refers to *athletic weakness/limitations*, depiction D refers to *positive skill level/accomplishments,* depiction E refers to *negative skill level/failure*, depiction G refers to *psychological strengths/emotional strengths* and depiction H refers to *psychological weakness/emotional weakness.*

Table 4.13: Tabulation of Nicol Depictions using Adjectives/Adjective Phrases
according to Kian's Descriptive Categories of Framing Athletes (2006)

No	Adjectives/Adjective Phrases	Freq	Code
1	The 26-year-old	1	A
2	Birthday girl	1	A
3	who turned 27	1	A
4	The 27-year-old	2	A
5	who is gunning to win the title for the sixth time	1	B
6	who is gunning for a sixth KL Open title	1	B
7	who is gunning for her sixth consecutive title	1	B
8	who will be gunning for a sixth consecutive title since 2005	1	B
9	who is gunning for her fourth consecutive Singapore Masters crown	1	B
10	who is gunning for her fifth Hong Kong Open crown	1	B
11	who is gunning for her ninth WISPA title in Doha	1	B
12	who is gunning for her fifth world title	2	B
13	who is seeking to claim a sixth WISPA tournament this season	1	B
14	who is unbeaten this year/ who is unbeaten thus far this year	3	B
15	who did not drop a single set in the tournament	1	B
16	who opens her campaign against a qualifier	1	B
17	who is using the tournament as a warm-up to the Guangzhou Asian Games next month	1	B
18	top seed/top seeded	6	B
19	a very good player	1	B
20	smashing form	1	B
21	fine form	1	B
22	Supreme	1	B
23	the raging favourite/the favourite	3	B
24	who will skip the Australian Open	1	C
25	who admitted that she was still 'getting used to the court' yesterday	1	C
26	who is unbeaten for her eighth WISPA title	1	D
27	the experienced	1	D
28	the best in the world	1	D
29	Four-time world champion	13	D

Table 4.13 continued

30	defending champion	3	D
31	Defending women's champion	1	D
32	World Champion	1	D
33	Five-time world champion	1	D
34	Commonwealth Games champion	1	D
35	Malaysia's squash queen	2	D
36	Malaysian squash sensation	1	D
37	Squash superstar	1	D
38	who also won gold in the recent Delhi Commonwealth Games	1	D
39	who won the title three consecutive time since 2006	1	D
40	who bagged seven WISPA titles	1	D
41	who bagged the Chennai Open early this month	1	D
42	who bagged her fourth consecutive Singapore Open title	1	D
43	who also bagged her seventh consecutive Asian title in Chennai in May	1	D
44	who bagged her eighth title in last month's Torneo International Bincetenario in Mexico	1	D
45	who has bagged 47 titles since turning pro in 2000	2	D
46	who has 41 WISPA titles	1	D
47	who is ranked number one in the world since August 2006	1	D
48	who has been the world No.1 since August in 2006	3	D
49	the world number one since 2006/ranked No. 1 in the world since 2006	2	D
50	who has been the world number one ranked player since August 2006	1	D
51	the World No. 1/World No. 1/ World number one	26	D
52	Malaysia's World No. 1	2	D
53	whose win yesterday marked her sixth WISPA title this year	1	D
54	whose best achievement on the WISPA circuit was winning all 10 tournaments she competed in 2008	1	D
55	who finished fourth in the 2006 Games in Melbourne	1	E
56	Focused	1	G
57	simply too good	1	G
58	hardly ruffled	1	G
59	devastating form	1	H
60	Troubled	1	H
61	off guard	1	H
62	under pressure	1	H
63	who were upset by Perry in the quarter-finals of the British Open in their last meeting in September	1	H
	Total	119	7 types

From the above table, it could be summarized that, Nicol is depicted in 7 of the 9

framing categories proposed by Kian (2006), which are A, B, C, D, E, G and H.

Depictions under the categories of *athletic prowess/strengths* (B) and *positive skills level/accomplishments* (D) dominated the categories. These findings are summarized in Table 4.14 where the frequency and percentage of occurrence of each type of framing category is noted.

Table 4.14 – Tabulation of Nicol's depictions according to Kian's Categories (2006) and the frequency and percentage of occurrence

Depictions No.	Depiction Code	Descriptive Categories of Framing Athletes (Kian, 2006)	No. of Phrases	Freq	%
1-4	A	Physical appearance/sexuality/attire	4	5	4.20
5-23	B	athletic prowess/strengths	19	29	24.38
24-25	C	athletic weakness/limitations	2	2	1.68
26-54	D	positive skill level/accomplishments	29	74	62.18
55	E	Negative skill level/failures	1	1	0.84
56-58	G	Psychological strengths/emotional strengths	3	3	2.52
59-63	H	Psychological weakness/emotional weakness	5	5	4.20
		Grand Total	63	119	100

Table 4.14 tabulated Nicol's depictions according to Kian's Framework of Descriptive Categories of Framing Athletes (2006) and the frequency as well as the percentage of occurrence of each category.

From the table, it could be summarized that, depictions of Nicol in the reports of the matches for the nine tournaments in season 2010 are categorised into seven framing categories outlined by Kian (2006). The frames are; (A) *physical appearance/sexuality/attire,* (B) *athletic prowess/strengths*, (C) *athletic weakness/limitation*, (D) *positive skill level/accomplishments*, (E) *Negative skill*

level/failures, (G) *Psychological strengths/emotional strengths* and (H) *psychological weakness/emotional weakness*. There was however no depictions of Nicol which fall under the other 2 categories; (F) *family role/personal relationships* and (I) *humour*.

Based on the above table, it can be seen that depictions 1 – 4 (4 phrases, occurred 5 times) that fall under the category of *physical appearance/sexuality/attire*, makes up 4.20% of the total depictions used. Depictions 5 – 23 (19 phrases) which fall under the category of *athletic prowess/strengths* occurred 29 times making up 24.38% of total depiction occurrence. Then, depictions 24 – 25 (2 phrases) fall under the category of *athletic weakness/limitations* occurred only twice while depictions 26 – 54 (29 phrases) fall under *positive skill level /accomplishments* category with 74 occurrences, dominating 62.18% of the total occurrence percentage. Other than that, depiction 55 occurred once depicting her *negative skill level/failures* (0.84%), depictions 56 – 58 which also occurred once each depicted her *psychological strengths/emotional strengths* (2.52%) and finally depictions 59 – 63 which depicted her *psychological weakness/emotional weakness* (4.20%) also occurred once each.

Thus, it can be inferred that, from the adjectives/adjective phrases used to depict Nicol Ann David throughout the 2010 WISPA tournament season, the *accomplishments frame* and *strengths frame* dominated her depictions as compared to other frames. Though her limitations/weaknesses are also referred to in the athletic weakness, negative skill level and psychological weakness frames, in total, they only constitute 6.72% of the occurrences. This means that 93.28% of the time, Nicol is positively framed in the reports.

In summary, the verbal analysis of the reports established several main frames used to depict Nicol. The main frame identified through analysing nouns/noun phrases is the *personalization frame*, while through analysing adjectives/adjective phrases, both *positive skill level/accomplishments* and *athletic prowess/strengths frames* are identified

as the main frames. Therefore, the verbal analysis revealed 3 main frames namely *personalization, accomplishments* and *strengths* that were used to depict Nicol in the reports.

To conclude, the findings of the analysis on the depictions used to refer to Nicol Ann David during the WISPA tournaments season 2010 reveal that Nicol Ann David, the Malaysian ranked World No. 1 woman squash player does not suffer marginalization, trivialization and sexualisation in the reports on the matches of the tournaments she participated. This is because the reports did acknowledge her strengths and accomplishments more than her weaknesses and failures.

4.1.2 Icons - Visual Analysis

This section reveals the findings of the visual analysis of the icons in the reports. This analysis is to ascertain whether the images present in the texts complement the *personalization, accomplishments* and *strengths frames* established by the lexical analysis of the previous section. This will be done by analysing the interaction between the images and the readers of *The Star*, through the icons provided by the news journalists in the reports. Out of the 45 data gathered, 20 reports had icons in the texts. There are 16 different icons but icon number 3, 4, 7 and 15 occurred twice thus adding up to 20 occurrences of icons. The icons were first analysed on the *contact* element followed by the *social distance* element.

Contact is realized by analysing the connecting vectors such as eyelines and gestures. The connection may mean *to offer* or *to demand* (Kress and Van Leeuwen, 1999), a connection to be established between the participant, Nicol and the viewers, the readers of *The Star*. Table 4.15 summarized the icons and the presence of contact.

Table 4.15 – The number of icons and the presence contact

Icon/Visual	Contact
1	Yes
2	No
3x2	No
4x2	No
5	No
6	No
7x2	No
8	No
9	No
10	No
11	No
12	No
13	No
14	Yes
15x2	No
16	No

Table 4.15 tabulated the number of icon and the presence contact. From the table, it could be seen that only *icons 1* and *14* show that Nicol had connection with her readers, while other icons, 2-13, 15 and 16 show that there is no eye contact between Nicol and her readers. It could be due to the nature of the shots of icons which were taken while Nicol was in action. Table 4.16 summarizes the frequency and percentage of Nicol's contact with her readers.

Table 4.16 – Tabulation of Frequency and Percentage of Contact Occurrences

CONTACT	*Freq*	*%*
Yes	2	*10*
No	18	*90*
TOTAL	**20**	***100***

Overall, we can see that, 90% of the time, images of Nicol did not establish any interaction with her readers. The outcome of *contact analysis* is such, as the shots were taken when Nicol was in action on the court. Thus, she needed to focus and concentrate on the game rather than demanding contact with the readers. These icons, however, are

described as offering information (Kress and van Leeuwen, 2006) about Nicol. Therefore, 90% of the time the icons are providing information about Nicol. Icons 4, 7, 10 and 11 for example, provide information on Nicol's strengths as an athlete where the icons show very clearly her strength in making a stroke and evidence of her muscle strength during the matches. Icons 8 and 15 on the other hand, provide information on her accomplishments where she is shown with the medal and trophy she has won. The images also focus on her muscles and serious facial expressions. She is therefore, portrayed as a very focused and determined person in the images.

The other 10% of the time, images of Nicol were described as establishing interaction with her readers. This can be seen in Icon 1 and 14 where Nicol is looking directly to the readers. Therefore, these icons are *demand* images, where we can see that Nicol is looking at the viewers as if demanding the viewers to share *some kind of imaginary relation* (Kress & Van Leeuwen, 2006) with her.

Social Distance on the other hand is determined by different ranges of shots such as close-up shot, medium shot or long shot. Each range signifies different relations between participant and viewers. Table 4.17 tabulates the shots of the icons used to depict Nicol Ann David in the visuals of the reports and provides the signified meanings of the shots suggested by Kress and Van Leeuwen (1999);

Table 4.17: Tabulation of Icons Shot Types and the Signified Social Distance

Icon/ Visual	Social Distance	
	Shots	Signified meaning
1	Medium	Close social relationship
2	Medium	Close social relationship
3x2	Long	Public distant, stranger relationship
4x2	Medium close	Distant personal relationship
5	Medium	Close social relationship
6	Medium	Close social relationship
7x2	Medium close	Distant personal relationship
8	Medium	Close social relationship
9	Long	Public distant, stranger relationship
10	Medium close	Distant personal relationship
11	Medium long	Distant relationship
12	Medium close	Distant personal relationship
13	Medium close	Distant personal relationship
14	Medium close	Distant personal relationship
15x2	Medium close	Distant personal relationship
16	Medium close	Distant personal relationship

Table 4.17 tabulated shots of Nicol in the images and the signified meanings of the shots as suggested by Kress and Van Leeuwen (1999). From the table, we can see that *medium close shot* dominated the type of shots involved, with 11 occurrences. This shot signifies that Nicol is being portrayed as having distant personal relationship with her readers. The next highest occurring shot is *medium shot* with 5 images. This shot signifies Nicol as having close social relationship with her readers. 1 shot was categorised under *medium long shot* which signifies distant relationship and 3 shots were categorised as *long shot* which signifies public distant and stranger relationship.

From the above findings, the frequency and percentage of shot types and the signified social distance between Nicol and her readers are tabulated in Table 4.18.

Table 4.18: Tabulation of Frequency and Percentage of Shot Types
and the Signified Social Distance

SOCIAL DISTANCE signified	*Freq*	*%*
i) Medium close shot - distant personal relationship	11	55.00
ii) Medium shot - close social relationship	5	25.00
iii) Medium long shot - Distant relationship	1	5.00
iv) Long shot - Public distant, stranger relationship	3	15.00
Grand total	**20**	**100**

Table 4.18 shows the frequency and percentage of the shots and the signified social distance. From the table, it could be seen that there are 4 main shots used to depict Nicol visually; *medium close shot, medium shot, medium long shot* and *long shot*.

From the table also, it could be seen that Nicol is depicted as having different range of relationship with her readers. She is portrayed as establishing different range of relationships, from close to distant relationship and from a personal to a 'stranger' relationship. There are 16 icons depicting her personal and social relationship with her readers. This makes up a total of 80% while her 'distant and stranger relationship' makes up 20% with only 4 icons depicting such a relationship.

Overall, it could be summarized that, images in the reports depicted Nicol Ann David as having different range of relationship with her readers. Despite having a diverse range of relationship, it is deduced that generally, Nicol was depicted as a squash queen who has bridged the social gap between her readers, establishing mainly personal and social relationship. This complements the personalization frame established in the verbal analysis of the data.

With regard to the analysis of contact, it can be summarized that the majority of the icons were included in the reports with the purpose of *offering information* to complement the verbal reports. The information provided is about Nicol's

accomplishment and the portrayal of her athletic prowess and strengths while in action during tournaments. Nicol's accomplishment is portrayed in icons 1, 8, 14 and 15 where the shots show her with her medal and trophies. Nicol's strengths on the other hand, can be seen in icons 4, 7, 10, 11 and 13 for example, where these shots emphasize her strokes, muscles and serious facial expression while on court. Thus, this information supports the accomplishment and strength frames established by the verbal analysis of the texts. This shows that the visuals and verbal items complement each other in the reports and as such this proves that similar messages in the reports are presented in two different modes. Readers can either be more verbally or visually responsive to information. Presenting description about Nicol in the two modes means that the information in the reports can effectively reach most readers.

4.2 CONCLUSION

The chapter has clearly explained the major findings of the study. The findings cover both analyses carried out on the nouns/noun phrases, adjectives/adjective phrases and icons/images used to depict Nicol in the reports during the WISPA tournaments season 2010.

The nouns/noun phrases and adjectives/adjective phrases were analysed in order to examine the emerging frames of Nicol in the reports. The analyses deduced that, there are three major different frames which are *personalization frame, strengths frame* and *accomplishment frame*. While the findings on the icons used to depict Nicol in the reports confirmed that the presence of the icons does complement the three major frames established through linguistic analyses.

Chapter 5

CONCLUSION

5.0 Introduction

This final chapter of the study will discuss the findings, the implication of the study conducted and the suggestion for future research in three sub-sections. The first sub-section is on the findings where it will discuss the findings of the study based on the three research questions of the study. The second sub-section will discuss the implication of the study towards the field and finally the third sub-section will present the suggestions for future research.

5.1 Discussion of the Findings

Female athletes have been claimed to suffer marginalization, trivialization and sexualisation (Klien;1988, Kian; 2006, 2008, 2009) as compared to male athletes and this unfinished battle of the sexes has made this growing field a stagnant issue of contested gender (Shahid, 2006). Shahid further added that this field is in dire need of new directions and analyses.

In response to that, this study was, therefore, set out to examine how Nicol Ann David, the Malaysian World No. 1 ranked woman squash player, is being framed in the most circulated and the most widely read English-language Malaysian daily, *The Star* during the Women International Squash Players Association (WISPA) tournaments season 2010. The frames established based on the findings will determine whether Nicol also suffers marginalization, trivialization and sexualisation in the reports. Three main research questions were formed and the findings are discussed based on the questions;

The study conducted reveals that Nicol is usually framed using the *personalization frame*. Other frames that emerged from the study are; *localization frame, accomplishment frame and strengths frame*. This study introduces new frames namely *personalization frame* and *localization frame* that were found used to frame Nicol in the reports. The *personalization frame* was introduced as the depictions could not be categorised into any of Kian's categories. In this *personalization frame*, Nicol was depicted as *Nicol David, Nicol* and *the 27-year-old*. Hence, it is imperative to introduce the *personalization frame* to describe this set of depictions. The study supposed that depictions under *personalization frame* were utilized in the reports to bridge the social distance between Nicol and her readers. This is proven by the dominating use of the first name *Nicol* in the reports. The first name reference used in a social society indicates close relationship. Furthermore, the usage of age reference, *the 27-year-old* also proved that the social distance between Nicol and the readers is close. This is because age is not a matter to be publicly discussed especially a woman's age unless their relationship is close and personal.

Another new frame introduced in the study is the *localization frame*. It was introduced because in the news reporting of Nicol Ann David during the whole season, she was usually depicted as *the Penangite*, the state where she was born and as *the Malaysian*, the country where she is a citizen of. Furthermore, none of Kian's proposed categories describe this type of depictions. Therefore, it is believed that it is imperative to introduce the particular frame; the *localization* frame. The study presumed that the use of *localization frame* is influenced by the place of documentation and publication of the reports which is in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia, the country Nicol is a citizen of. Thus, depicting Nicol as *the Penangite* localized Nicol and as such would bring Nicol closer to her Malaysian readers. This also works to claim Nicol as ours.

Apart from that, each frame is believed to convey specific messages to the readers. Both *personalization* (*Nicol, Nicol David* and *the 27-year-old Malaysian*) and *localization (the Malaysian* and *the Penangite) frames* are assumed to be used to bridge the gap between the readers and Nicol. Being the world number one player and a squash superstar, it would socially put Nicol and the readers in a certain social distance, yet these frames managed to bridge this issue. Two other frames were identified; *accomplishment* and *strengths frames* and these are the frames proposed by Kian. Both frames were mostly depicted using adjectives/adjective phrases and can be described as to highlight her capability of impressive achievements. In the *accomplishment frame,* the depictions used are usually describing Nicol's achievements in the tournaments for example; *who is unbeaten for her eighth WISPA title, the best in the world* and *four-time world champion.* Meanwhile the *strength frame* describes Nicol's strengths that have help her in achieving her status as the World No. 1, for example, *...who is gunning for her fifth Hong Kong Open crown, ...who is gunning for her ninth WISPA title in Doha, ...who is gunning for her fifth world title,* and *...who is seeking to claim a sixth WISPA tournament this season.*

In short, it can be said that the findings on the frames used to depict Nicol verify that Nicol is not marginalized, trivialized or sexualised in the reports. This is evidenced by the *accomplishment, strength, localization* and *personalization frames* of Nicole established by analysing the verbal texts of the reports.

5.1.2 – Research Question 2 : How are the frames used to depict Nicol Ann David linguistically realized?

The study reveals that the frames used to depict Nicol Ann David is linguistically realized through the selection of lexical items used. Two major lexical groups, the nouns/noun phrases and adjectives/adjectives phrases played the important function in framing Nicol in the reports of her matches in the 9 WISPA tournaments, season 2010.

It is found that the lexical items; nouns/noun phrases are usually used when describing Nicol within the *personalization* and *localization frames.* In the *personalization frame,* Nicol is mostly referred to as *Nicol, Nicol David* and *the 27-year-old* while in the *localization frame*, Nicol is commonly referred to as *the Penangite* and *the Malaysian.* On the contrary, it is also noticed that the lexical items; adjectives/adjective phrases are frequently utilized when describing Nicol within the *strengths* and *accomplishment frames.* In the *strengths frame*, Nicol is for example, referred to as *a very good player, supreme* and *who is gunning for her ninth WISPA title in Doha*, while in the *accomplishment frame*, she is referred to as *who is unbeaten for her eighth WISPA title, the best in the world* and *defending champion* in her *accomplishment frame*.

The nouns/noun phrases used to refer to Nicol in the reports function as the subject of the issue discussed while the adjectives/adjective phrases used, function as the additional information on the subject discussed. It is also inferred that these adjectives/adjective phrases provide more information on the achievements this squash queen has achieved so far through the *accomplishment* and *strengths frames* established.

In short, the frames used to depict Nicol Ann David in the reports are linguistically realized by the 2 major lexical items; the nouns/noun phrases and the adjectives/adjective phrases.

5.1.3 – Research Question 3 : Do the visuals in the reports support the linguistic frames established by the verbal texts?

The findings of the study reveal that the visuals in the reports of Nicol Ann David support the linguistic frames established by the verbal texts.

From the contact analysis of the visuals, findings reveal that 18 out of 20 icons show that Nicol did not establish any interaction with her readers. This kind of icons, according to Kress and Van Leuween (1999) is said to *offer* information to the readers. From the findings, most icons with no interaction provide information on Nicol strengths. This is proven where the shots were mostly taken while she was in action on court. Thus, the icons highlighted her muscles, serious facial expressions that show concentration, and her powerful strokes. Therefore, it is inferred that these icons support the *strengths frame* established by the verbal texts. Apart from offering information about her strength, the icons also provide evidence of her achievements where in the images she is shown with the medal and trophy she had won. This is proof that visuals in the texts support the achievement frame established by the verbal analysis. Similarly, there are icons that show she established eye contact with the readers of the text. Here, Nicol is said to establish interaction with the readers because she was looking directly to them. This kind of image is called *demand image* (Kress and van Leeuwen, 1999) because when looking directly to the readers, Nicol is said to demand the readers to share *some kind of imagery relations* (Kress and van Leeuwen, 1999) thus making personal contact. Therefore, it can be deduced that these icons support the *accomplishment frame* as well as the personalisation frame established by the study.

The social distance analysis, on the other hand, reveals that all 20 icons show that there is an establishment of relationship between Nicol and her readers. The relationships established vary from close to distant relationship and from personal to social relationship. With 16 icons or 80% of the icons depicting Nicol as having

personal and social relationships with the readers, the study concluded that, the findings of the social distance analysis show that most of the icons of Nicol in the reports support the *personalization frame*.

Overall, the study proves that the visuals of Nicol Ann David in the reports support the three major frames of her. Consequently, this also substantiates that Nicol Ann David, the Malaysian female squash player who is ranked the World No. 1 is not being marginalized, trivialized or sexualised in her Malaysian media coverage as the verbal news reports together with the visuals, have also focused on her strengths and accomplishments. Such frames could probably be due to Nicol's constant excellent achievements in her sporting events, where she is claimed to be the legendary sport figure in Malaysia.

5.2 Implication of the Study

From the findings of the study, it is implied that, visual analysis should also be conducted along textual analysis. This is because this study has successfully highlighted the importance of visuals in texts, where the presence of visuals in these texts will contribute to a better understanding of the messages intended in the verbal texts and that the messages can reach more readers who can be more receptive to verbal or visual input. This is because what is highlighted verbally is reiterated visually.

Furthermore, this study can also be a useful reference for other researchers who are interested to study female athletes' representation and the media beyond the gender bias issue. Besides, this study could also be a practical orientation for sports analysts and sports commentators on the importance of appropriate visuals and lexical selection for reporting. This is because the visual and lexical items selected play a major role in disseminating the information to the listeners and viewers.

5.3 Suggestion for Future Research

This study has further enriched the field of sports news reporting by analysing reports to study the framing of a female athlete. Since this study could possibly be regarded as the pilot study of analysing news coverage of female athletes which, does not focus on gender bias issue. Other follow up studies would be more apposite to facilitate more conclusive findings that would certify, sustain and strengthen the discussion of framing female athletes around the world to be made.

A notable alternative that could be the follow up studies, are studies on female athletes of different sports events, and data collection hub also could be more varied such as obtaining data from the internet, the television and radio and from other newspaper publications. Besides that, studies can also focus on other female Malaysian athletes. This would allocate a great shift for this specifically developing yet inert field.

Lastly, interdisciplinary studies, between the linguistic field, sociology field, sports study field as well as communication field on news sports reporting of female athletes would support the findings to be more conclusive and realistic. Interdisciplinary studies would also be better should there be extensive outlook based on different frameworks.

5.4 Conclusion

The chapter has clearly discussed the findings of the study based on the three research questions outlined for the study. It has also put forth the implication of the study and the suggestions for potential future research.